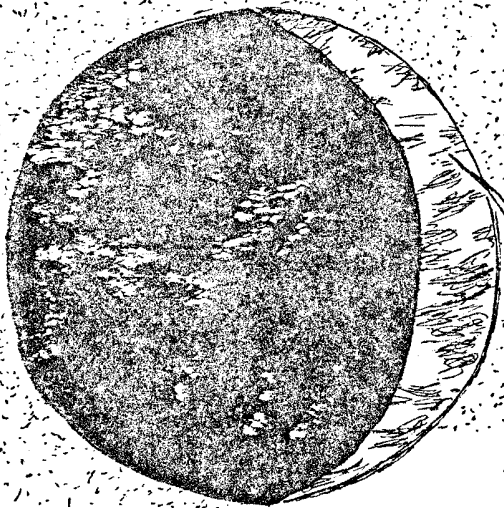
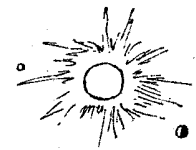
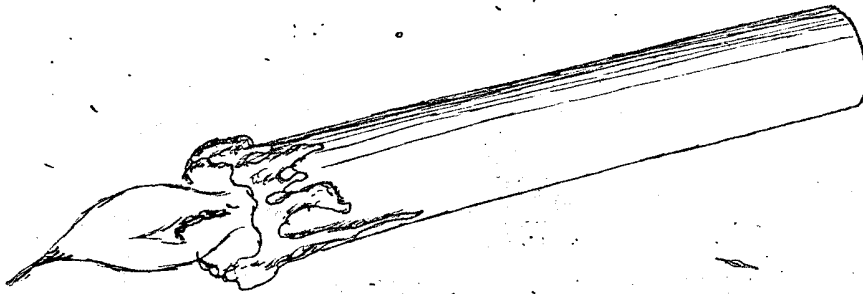


APA—TECH 19



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THIRD ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

The Amateur Press Association for and by
the members of General Technics

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The next deadline is Saturday, July 10 **SEND ALL MATERIAL TO GREG**

The copy count is 35 Minac is two pages every other mailing

YOUR ACCOUNT BEFORE POSTAGE IS \$2.83

Those who will be dropped if they don't postmail: Guy, Marty.

Those who Are Late: Angel, Bill- El, Jeff, Gretchen, Rolf, Kip.

Those who should contribute in #20: Mike B., Renee, Jenny, Al,
John, Paul, Bill H., Valli, Bill Roper, Keith.

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HAPPY THIRD BIRTHDAY, APA-TECH

Greg Ruffa is editing Apa-Tech #20, the next issue. SEND ALL MATERIAL TO HIM.

CONGRATULATIONS, ROLF AND MARY. At this time the chair would like to extend best wishes to Rolf Wilson and his new bride, Mary. We hope that they will spend many happy years together.

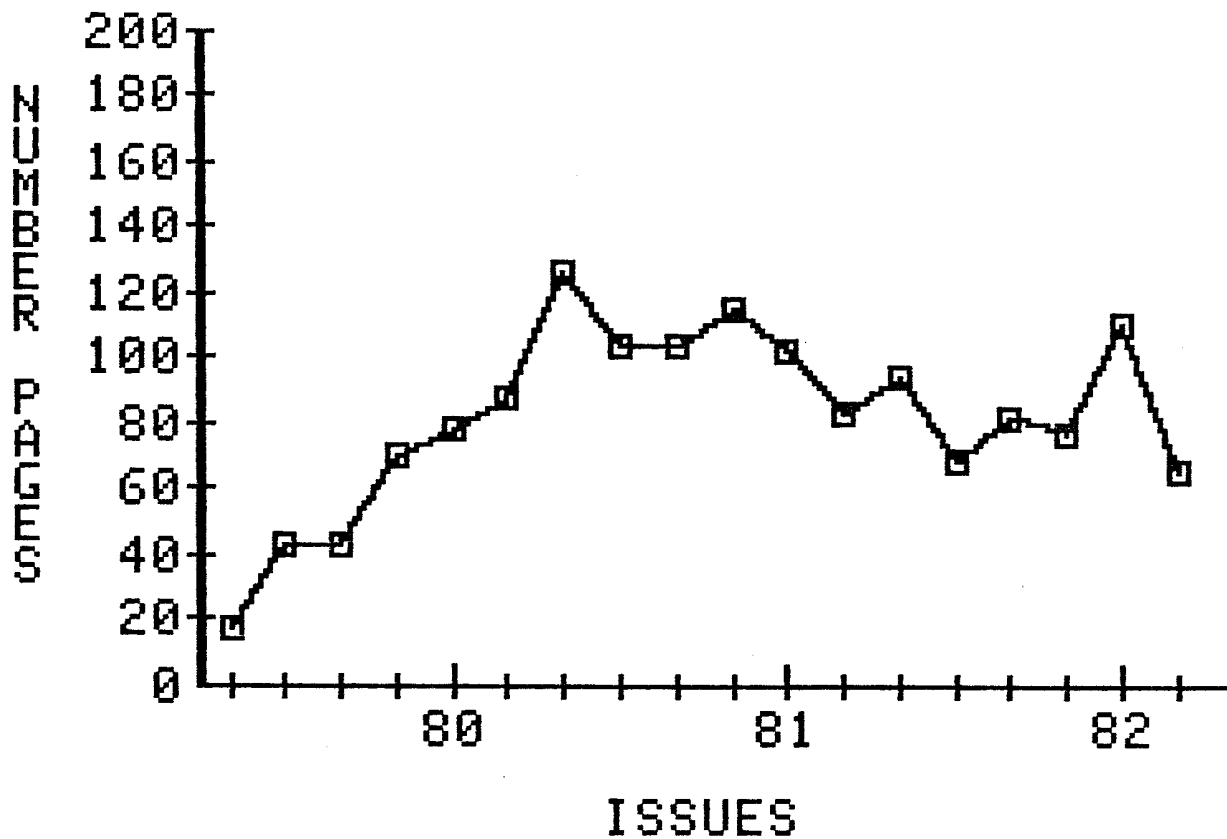
On that note we would like to propose a theme for Apa-Tech #21, October, 1982: TEN YEARS FROM NOW, ISSUE #61. In other words, write about what your life will be like or what the state of technology will be like in ten years time. To take Rolf, as an example, he might be writing about buying a computer for his three children with the winnings from his championship at the National Bridge Tournament. Greg might be writing about his promotion to the head of the satellite division of Western Union and about the new particle beams they'd just installed. What will the world be like for you in ten years? Please write about it.

Thanks are due to Clif Flynt who provided this issue with mailing labels. It's good that there are people out there in Apa-Tech land who are ambitious enough to use their computer more than just as a word processor (like me.) Thanks.

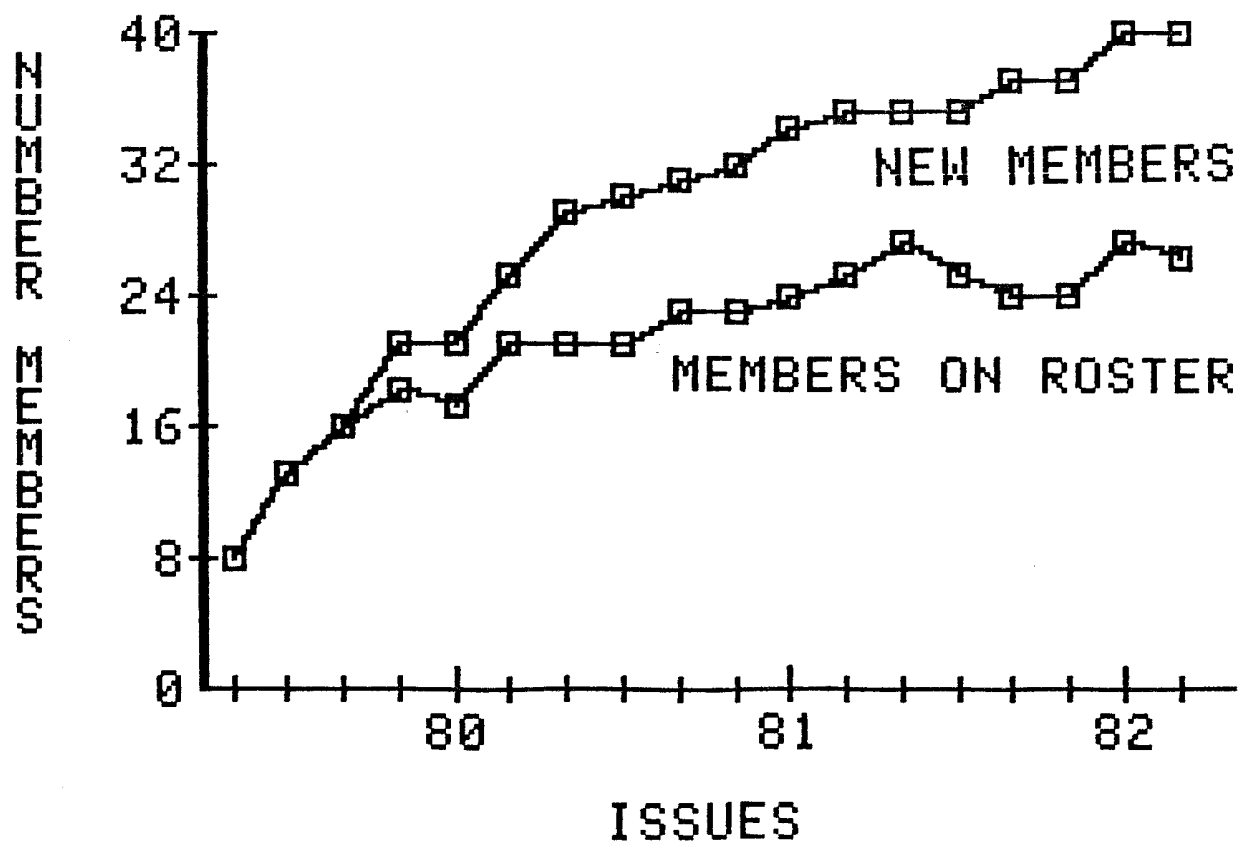
To reiterate: I am committed to seeing this apa work. I admit my culpability as to the lateness of this apa. It has been late. But with the help of conscientious people such as Greg (who's provided us with the indices this month and has hosted this apa and will host it), Marty (who's provided emergency hosting), Clif (who provided us with mailing labels this issue), and others I think it will work out. Let's see what happens.

GTB

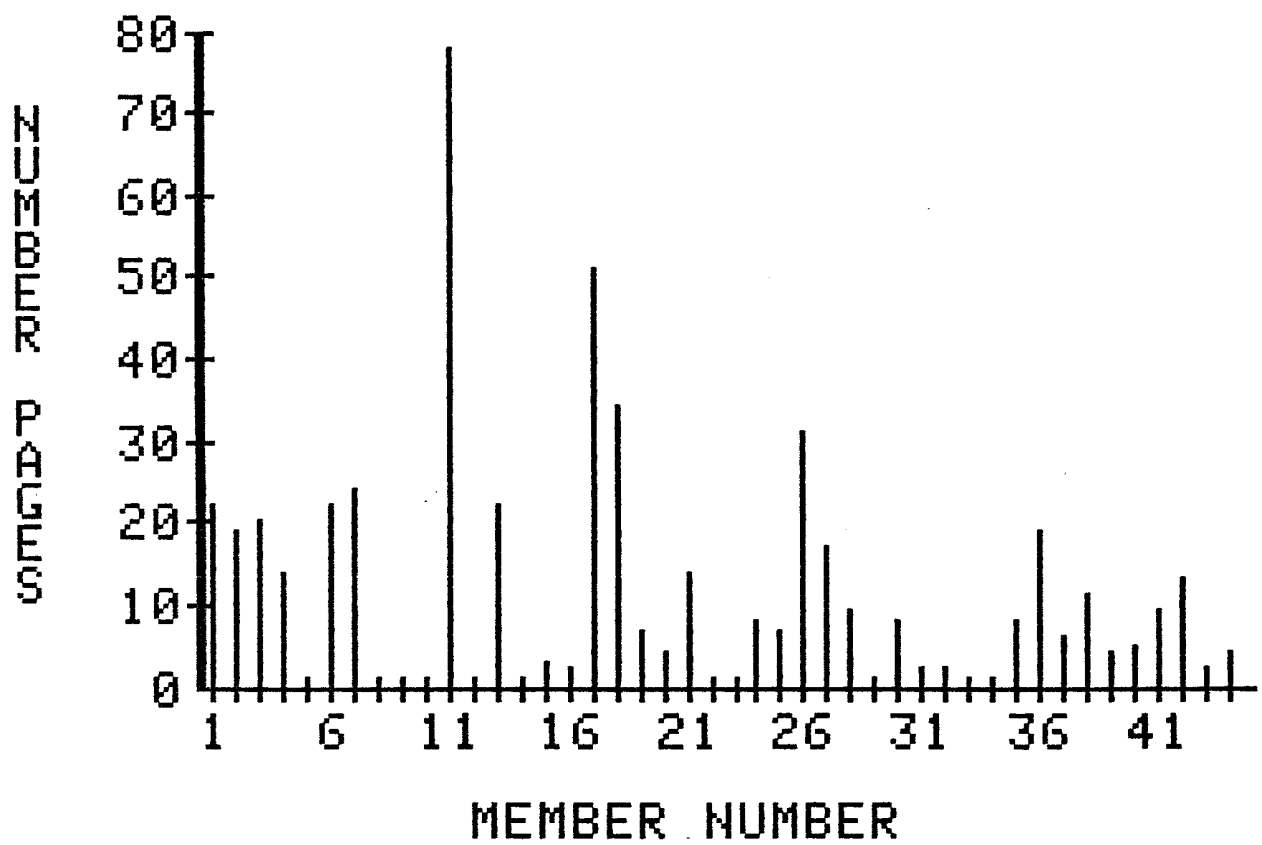
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WELCOME TO MAGIC MIMED LAND

An APAzine for APA-TECH (and anyone else who'll listen) from

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David D. Levine
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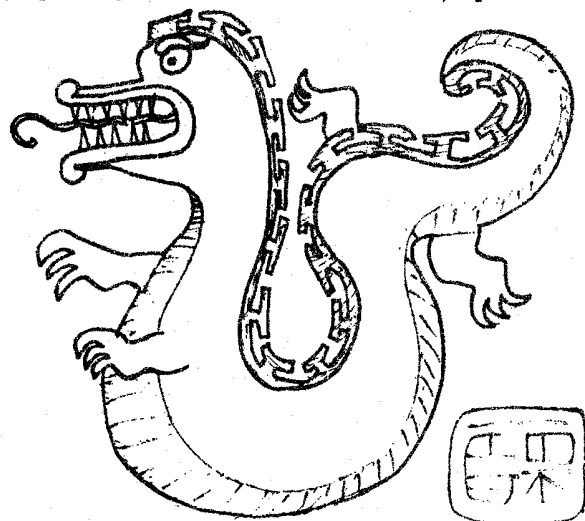
Well you may ask why I have two addresses. (Well, you may ask why I have two addresses.) The answer is that although I will be working in Milwaukee (and living at home) this summer, I will be visiting St. Louis as much as possible so am maintaining the St. Louis address as my "official mailing address". However, if you should want to call or visit me chances are I'll be at the Milwaukee address most of the time for the next three months. I'll be moving back to St. Louis full-time on Aug. 25 or so. So much for that.

This is being prepared at 3:00 in the morning (or so) on X-con Saturday (which help to explain if it seems a little flakier than usual). My life in the recent past/future has been/will be a bit hectic. Here is/will be my schedule: Thursday: pack up most of my belongings and drive from St. Louis to Milwaukee. On way, stop off at Champaign-Urbana and drop off Rolf & Mary's wedding present. (Gasp! I just realized that at this point they've been married for hours already!) Almost immediately upon arrival, drive to airport to pick up grandparents Levine. Friday: spend day with aforementioned grandparents. Spend evening at X-con (hectic enough by itself). Saturday: (now projecting into the future) Spend morning at X-con, run off this zine and do similar nifty stuff. Dinner with parents, grandparents Levine, and grandparents Gordon (who flew in that afternoon). After dinner, return to con (?). Sunday: graduation ceremony. My mother is getting her doctorate in Information Science (under the auspices of Education) from the University of Wisconsin -- Milwaukee. Fortunately, the graduation ceremony is only blocks from the con hotel, as is the hotel where various grandparents are staying. During ceremony, leave and take an aunt to the airport so she won't miss her flight. Monday: start work. I'm working at the same place I did last summer, doing the same stuff (as far as I know now). That's why I'm up at 3 AM writing this zine.

The reason this is mimeed (aside from my continuing effort to make each of my APA-TECH zines look unlike any of the others) is that I was sort of commandeered (actually, I volunteered) into helping Dick cart his mimeo down to the mimeo room at X-con,

and stayed around to help him run some stuff off. Within minutes I was A) mediocrally proficient at the operation of the machines, B) hooked on the power trip of seeing hundreds of copies of my own drivel pouring out on the unsuspecting world, and C) lured by the thought of running off my next APA-TECH zine (or at least a major part of it) for free. Besides, mimeo is so faaaanish! I immediately (well, more or less immediately... well, seven hours later) ran home and began composing something to run through Uncle Dick's mimeo. To wit, this thing. This will be electro-stenciled (I would have tried to cut a stencil on my dot-matrix printer, but the stencils were locked away and this way I can stick in some illos) and run off on Dick's infamous \$50 nine-hole Gestetner.

What news? (I'll not try to compose mailing comments on this little sleep) I finished school for the year, after considerable strain. I will graduate at the end of next year with a B.A. in architecture (not the same as a B.Arch.) as long as nothing goes wring. This semester I somehow managed to pull 3 A's, an A-, and an Incomplete, which I will make up soon (all I have to do is write a paper). Added to the 3 A's and 2 A+'s I got last semester, this is my best academic year ever (pardon me for bragging, but I worked for those grades!) The one A- was because I had personality differences with a professor. He gave me a B but the other grade for that semester (I had him for one quarter and another professor for the other) brought it up to an A-. WordStar helped a LOT. I was able to write an A final paper in one weekend for my Anthro class this semester, which made up for some fair-to-middling exams (the extra credit work I did helped too). It made less of a difference in other courses, but was significant all around. Of course, I spent a lot of time doing hobbyist programming when I should have been studying...



I am under orders to draw every day this summer. This comes from the professor who gave me a B (as I said, personality differences. I'm not into being ordered around by swaggering, tin-plated dictators with delusions of godhood.) but I'll try to do it. Illos can be fun, and profitable. I've been tending to work in Rapidograph and colored pencil lately (right, Rolf?), but I enjoy painting and I feel that for some reason I can get more realistic results with paint than pencil or pen and ink. I'll probably try a number of media. I'll also try to do more realistic drawing and less cartooning (but don't be surprised if you still see mostly cartoons here... they're easier!)

This summer I am also going to learn a new computer language, although I can't seem to decide between Pascal, C, PL/I, and maybe Ada. Although some programmers assure me that one language is not unlike another, others declare that such-and-such a language is not worth the disks it's printed on and there's no real consensus. It doesn't help that I'm unsure what I want this language to do for me. Do I want one which is a good, structured hobbyist language (probably Pascal), a good language for micros in the future (probably C due to its connections with Unix), a production language that will help me get a computer job if I can't find an architecture-related job (probably PL/I or (shudder) COBOL or FORTRAN), or what? The only programs I know I want to write in it are a simple database handler to begin cataloging my library and a routine to make graphic titles on my printer. Both involve rather heavy disk file access, so a language which handles files well is probably good for me. I am agonizing over the decision because these languages cost around \$250 to \$500 apiece and I can only afford one (leaving the issue of software piracy completely out of the discussion for now). I can't even base the decision on the relative prices of the languages, since the more expensive ones include such things as macro-assemblers (which are expensive in their own right) and the cheaper ones are things like Ada which are of uncertain value at the moment.

Half an X-con report. I arrived at about 8 PM on Friday in the cold rain (it had been 70 degrees and muggy in St. Louis 24 hours earlier, and here I was in the middle of a California winter in Wisconsin in May) and found registration about to close. Fortunately, I knew someone there and they let me register. Minutes later, I heard someone being mad. This person was upset about a friend of hers missing registration and not being able to attend any of the con functions that night. From what she had to say (I rubbed her back and made her calm down and talk, for although I didn't have anything to do with the con it is my home town and I want to preserve its fannish reputation) the registration people had been extremely rude. It

turned out to be a typical problem of mistaken assumptions and lack of communication, but her complaint was just one of many I heard about the con in a few hours. All of the committee members I talked to were saying "not again next year", leaving me wondering whether there'll be an X-con 7. (As far as I know there will be, but I don't know who'll be running it.) As mentioned above, I spent much of the rest of the con (so far) with Dick Smith in Magic Mineo Land. At 2 AM I was invited for food and conversation, but declined in favor of going home and working on APA-TECH. My priorities are a little screwy sometimes...

Trivial news items and fiddly-bits to fill out some more of the page: Rumor has (which should be confirmed by the time you read this) that Spock dies in Trek II, but in a way which makes his return in the next sequel possible (i.e. inevitable). I am wearing a button of my own design (made on a button-maker my mother got my father for his birthday) which reads "IF YOU STRIKE ME DOWN, KHAN, I WILL BECOME MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU COULD POSSIBLY IMAGINE..."

I need a room for Chicon. Greg? Jerry?

Anybody know anyone from Knoxville, TN who might be persuaded to let a techie and a few friends crash for two or three nights in mid-August? I really want to see the World's Fair, for my 20th Century Architecture course last semester showed me that the most significant architecture of each decade tends to come out at the World's Fair. However, I despair of finding a room near Knoxville at a reasonable price, or even any price. We're willing to pay, even.

The reason my Pooh story in the last zine was entitled "Contracrostipuntus" is that the first letters of each speech, taken in reverse order, spell out HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ONE AND ALL. I attempted to emphasize this by printing the first letter of each speech in **boldface**, but this didn't quite come out in squash-o-vision printing.

My Chrysler Building paper (possibly mentioned last time, possibly not... I haven't got an APA-TECH handy) has apparently been accepted for publication by Dichotomies, the architecture student journal of the University of Michigan at Detroit, for their spring issue. More word later, I hope.

If I stop here I'll leave some room for illos. This probably won't be my entire zine, but it's all I can write while I have access to the mimeo. The next page will probably either be offset or Xerox, and may look completely different. See you back on the Funway!

David J. Lin

Your Only Friend and Humble Narrator

YOUNG AND ABROAD

in the

Solar System

Launched from the typing fingers of Michael Sestak, believe it or not, still residing in that Postal Box Number 1866 Fort Collins, Colorado 80524

Well, at least the small disty last time means I should have little trouble commenting to everyone and still making the deadline. (Any etymologists out there know why the line has to be dead before you can meet it?)

All has been quite dull, boring or disgusting around here. The school term is finally over and good riddance to it. Then I had to convince the admissions office that I am now eligible for in-state tuition. Finally I can start working on something approximating research. We might even get to do some field work this summer. tracing the plume from a Forest Service controlled burn and comparing the results with our combined wind prediction and pollution dispersion model.

I really can't think of much else to write now so on to...

MAILING COMMENTS

555 Your repro was terrible, probably the usual degradation
COUP in services after a revolution. I hope Walnut Street does not become a Maginot line (on the other hand, the fortifications might make a great tourist attraction for Kalamazoo). The rearrangement of Isher is sad, but I hope it gives everyone involved a chance to be friends.

On other matters, the rotating editorship is fine with me. I would just like a firm copy deadline and mailout date. However, if you could arrange it. I wouldn't be averse to extending the first two weeks of the months issues are due.

TRANSPORTER How long have you been hiding your number in
TOPICS the O? I just noticed it.

I not only remember watching the original Alfred Hitchcock presents shows, but KBDI runs them every weekday here. The most fun I get out of them and the old Twilight Zone episodes is watching for later to be famous actors cropping up. For the trivialists; In what Twilight Zone episode did William Shattner star?

On tracing of energy weapons. I was refering to tracing to determin whodunit, not whereitwent. If you find a slug, and a potential weapon you can do tests to determine if the slug could have been fired through that particular weapon. Practical energy weapons may be fantasy, but if they did exist that particular method of matching weapon and victim would be gone.

I know about the lasers used in scanning systems in checkout counters and you know about them. My question is in view of their existence and lack of sheilding from customers, why is it convention committees and the like are becoming paranoid about about people carrying lasers which are no more powerful, because the concoms are afraid some one might claim eye damage and sue?

I don't know which I feel worse about, Richard Nixon getting his signature on the plaque placed on the moon by Apollo 11 or the impending prospect of Ronald Reagan making a hoopla over the shuttle launch this July 4th.

INTO Hazzah, hazzah, hazzah and good luck indeed (but then
THE I am biased).
SEA

ah yes, the question of the tools to build the tools to build the tools to build the tools... We as humans have created a marvelous supply of gedgetry. We as individuals understand so few of them. However, I think that is more of a problem for now than after the apocalypse. Then, all we have to do is save the knowledge that such things did exist and knowing a thing is possible is a big step in making it easier to invent something (even reinvent). But new we have people using all kinds of machines daily which they have little or no concept how they work, but they depend on the machines. This can only get worse the way our schools are going and with the ever increasing science and technical developments. So if you are puzzled at how many people can be so easily misled by advertisements, just wait ten years.

Actually, except for my continued disappointment that the shuttle is only half a shuttle, I am still very excited about it. No blasé attitude here. But then I am still amazed whenever I take a plane trip that so many tons can be made to fly and that people figured out how to do it.

DOWN Hmm. between you and Keith we're going to have a
TO THE water-logged APA soon. Gad, the last time I heard
SEA of tying that many D cells together was for setting
 off explosive bolts in missile silos where you want
one big jolt of electricity to fire of a whole series of
bolts at once and can't rely on outside power.

RABBIT I disagree with you wholeheartedly on what cities
RUNES are and why they are that way. I don't really
 know why people have begun doing this, but most
people seem to treat human institutions as though they had
an existence separate from the people that make them up.
Cities were created by people. They have the character-
istics given them by the people who have lived in them
over the ages and are living in them now. A city is not
an entity separate from these people, which has problems
that can somehow be remedied independently of these people.
To change (improve or whatever) cities or any human institu-
tion you must study the relationships between people that
are the institution, not some inanimate object given the
name of city (or economy or government, etc). By chance
(it's not a topic I'm likely to deliberately seek out)
I recently caught the end of a documentary on malls. The
producers actually wanted to make a point in doing the
show. Some malls are places of great beauty but not many
people go there, or at least don't stay long. Others,
whether places of beauty or not are always thronging with
people. The reason, some are made from the architects
point of view, others with the people who are to use them
in mind. Things of people work better when they are thought
of in terms of the people. When thought of in terms of
inanimate objects. malls, cities and all such will fail.

SING HO This is unfortunately going to be one of my
 sneaky fake comments. Actually, I can't find
much to comment on and don't know you well enough to just
pull something out of the air, but I like to make everyone
feel I really did read their contribution and not just
skip past it. I definitely liked Time Bandits more the
second time I saw it than the first. When I first saw it
I thought it would have made a great Saturday matinee
(back when I went to Saturday matinees as regular as the
day of the week rolled around). But around here it was
advertised as an adult movie at least as much as for kids.
On that score I was disappointed. Now I know Terry Gilliam
wanted it to be a smash kids movie first and something
parents wouldn't have to suffer to sit through second. Seeing
it the second time, I think it would have been the hit of
the summer in my matinee days.

JUST We have punishments for those who don't comment
IRRITA- on our zines (mostly getting obnoxious comments on
BILL what they didn't comment on). It's a strange world.
Not so long ago, an engineer couldn't get a job
driving a taxi (too much competition from other out of work
engineers) but the corporates were bemoaning the state of
affairs wherein the schools were not turning out enough MBA's.
Now, 'there's a recession on' and new MBA's are not needed
but the high tech corps are bewailing the lack of new
engineers. Write some more or it gets even triter.

VALLI & DICK Stay out of the woods!

THE JERRY Gad, it boggles the imagination. What have I
BUILT ZINE gotten myself in for? I make an honest effort
to comment to everyone that contributes to this
APA and someone slips in a zine composed almost entirely of
Read and Enjoyed But No Comments to everyone else. May
you suffer a dirth of typing paper and an overabundance of
purple prose. To be positively rude, you might try looking
at Renée's comments on why the oe should not be moved to
Chicago and consider that in how your reading of the zines
is organized. Try concentrating on reading and learning
about those not in the Chicago area, those you are not
familliar with. After all, that is largely what an APA is
supposed to be for, to keep in touch with people you don't
see often. Enough nastiness and don't take it personally
as this comment should really be spread over a number of
members.

GUYLEM Of a sudden I have an urge to know about monopoles.
Baardo A recent science News article reported the use of
a relatively cheap device to (if everything was
done correctly) detect the passage of a magnetic
monopole. One such event was apparently detected after a
month of operation. My standard college physics says a
magnetic field is produced by a changing electric feild
(moving electrons). So where does a monopole come from.
The SN article also said they are very massive (like virus
size). Why? I know these are not simple questions, but
neutrinos seemed more reasonable with little or no mass.

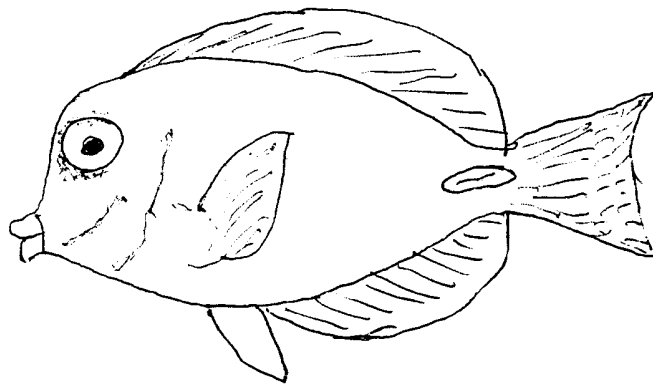
DR GONZO Yes, stay in. Recruit others who don't have the
least interest in computers or electronics if
you want. One thing I like in APA-TECH is the diversity
and more such will not be complained about by me.

MORAL Dare I comment? But I must, it's part of the rules.
TALE After all that and all these years you still hate
to type! Some things don't change. Perhaps that
thought alone is enough to ensure that we will survive.
More than that. there is room for hope; and more than that
at least some of our hopes will be fulfilled (as some of
yours have been already in that mass of living).

CONVENTIONAL If I can bear to leave this oasis next ot the mountains I might consider your company when I graduate. I am not really a computer hack (though I seem so to some). I worked at the Johnson space Center for a few years analyzing LANDSAT imagery for use in crop yield forcasting. I only hope NASA manages to get LANDSAT D up before the old satelites die or a lot of companies like yours will be in hard times for a while (aircraft imagery is considerably more expensive).

I have poor eyesight and cannot (legally) drive a car so I am a bicyclist by necessity (not that I don't enjoy it usually). I get kind of a kick out of the effect on drivers and pedestrians when I pass by with my bicycle loaded with groceries or some more exotic package.

Surgeon Fish



*from the Marine Biology
Coloring Book*

chromatic

aberrations

A zine for Apa-Tech #19 by Gail Hanrahan, with special thanks to Michael Gorkick, who loaned me the 1200 baud modem (which I even use for doing real work, on occasion) that I'm using to get this done on time. Same home address as Jamie's (surprise!). Can be reached daytimes at 213-535-1896, my own phone in my own private (at least for another month) closet at work, or randvax!trwmlcn!hanrahan on electronic-type mail through *wucp*.

Greetings!

I suppose that it is only fair that I give you all some background. After all, I have read all the ishes of Apa-Tech (and Pyro) that Jamie has cluttering up the apartment, and no one (except Jamie, and Keith, and now Valli) has any idea who I am... I wouldn't want you to think that I'd take an unfair advantage (I would, but not this time!)

I'm a native Californian, born in Palo Alto. Lived there for three years, then Birmingham, Michigan for three years, then back to California to live in Palos Verdes for 10 years. I hated every minute of Palos Verdes; too snobby for words. And of course, being a science fiction fan didn't help the "fitting in" problems at all. Fortunately, my father was transferred to Hughes Aircraft's division in Carlsbad in 1976. Carlsbad, California, that is, about 35 miles north of San Diego. It was in San Diego that I first encountered large-scale organized fandom (something I sort of regret now (the organization, not the fandom) but that's another story), attended my first convention, missed my first and second Worldcons (tonsillitis and no money respectively were the reasons for that), joined my first apa, etc., etc. Also got married, as you already know.

Due to various above-mentioned financial difficulties, I ended up at San Diego State University. I've finally managed to convince their administration that they should let me graduate; I'm doing that (graduating, that is) this May, after

having finished my classes in December of 1980. (!!) I'll have a B.S. in Information Systems (strongly business-oriented computer science degree).

I'm working at TRW Electronics and Defense Group in Information Processing Operations. I'm currently (and likely to be for the next couple of years) doing systems and applications programming on Unix 4.1bsd running on a VAX 780. The project is supposed to be building a local network of Unices running in various buildings around here. It's interesting work, my technical manager is an interesting flake. All in all, I'm having a heck of a good time.

Production Notes

This zine was produced on a Benson-Varian raster printer-plotter using *utroff* for text formatting, giving me pretty typeset Hershey type. Ain't it nice? This particular printer prints at 200 dots per inch.

Mailing Comments on Apa-Tech #18

555 Times -We could always hold elections each year for OE. Then everyone could get a chance to share in the fun...

Transporter Topics -No, it isn't fun being sick, and it's less fun being injured... Hope you're feeling better by now.

re ct Dave L., When you've read a lot, the stories begin to have more and more similarities, and it becomes harder and harder to come up with anything truly original. This might explain why satire seems to be such a popular form in fandom (aside from obvious opportunities to poke fun).

Into the Sea of Quacks... -Three auto accidents in 1980? I've probably topped that record; I had, in the month of May, no less than two (2) auto accidents in FIVE days. And got whiplash from the first of them. (Jamie was unhurt, though, thank Whomever.) When I go into the Auto Club (where we have our insurance), they ask me, "Was this about the first accident or the second?" and I cringe. At least neither of the accidents was my fault...

I don't think I could ever get tired of watching the shuttle launch (even if I *did* sleep through the first one...).

We'll be sorry to see you leave. No more Techie Annex West. Best of luck with grad school - though I may even get a chance to tell you in person.

Down to the Sea with Chips —You have a very nice way of relating anecdotes. I giggled all the way through the tale of the battery pack. Nothing that interesting ever happens at TRW. Although I could tell you about the time I was being given instruction on how to unlock a terminal, and the instructions were wrong, and the machine crashed...

re ct Jamie, he likes all that weird stuff a lot better than I do. I have to be in exactly the right mood to listen to it. My preference is for Earl Klugh, Bob James, Christopher Parkening, among others.

Rabbit Runes —Today it is sunny, about 70 degrees out, slight breeze. This can't be the "dramatic climatic change" you referred to! I remember one occasion when the lights went out; my mother and I drove, in a terrible rainstorm, to a part of town where there was still power and bought a thermos—full of coffee for the addicts in the family who couldn't wait for the power to come back on. Of course, by the time we got back, the lights *were* back on, and they'd already made a pot of coffee. Finagle strikes again.

Sing Ho! —I love your zines; I've loved Pooh since I was that high. Have you seen the book, *The Tao of Pooh*? This person (don't remember the author's name) purports to explain how Pooh exemplifies the Tao, and how the Tao is exemplified by Pooh (or words to that effect). Honest, that's pretty much what it said on the jacket. And a friend of ours refers to his Apple II as "Eeyore".

Just Irrita—Bill —re looking for work, I can certainly sympathize with you. Harlan Ellison in one of his intros once remarked that when you *really* need a job, it seems as if the employers can smell the desperation on you. This definitely jibes with my experience and that of many of my San Diego friends. Even having work experience didn't seem to help some of them; as you said, lying in the interview worked best.

I had a heckuva time finding a [programming] job, with only a minor amount of non-school type experience. I only realized later that I'd encountered a remarkable amount of sexism on the part of the interviewers. They liked to ask if I had plans to get married, have children, etc. All highly illegal, of course, but did it stop them? I got the job at TRW through a friend of Jamie's who was willing to take his word about my abilities.

I'm glad you were wrong and "Emergence" did make it onto the ballot.

Jerry Built A Zine —see my ct John Frambach re weather. RAEBNOC (But No Other Comments).

[Jamie has just started playing "Fanfare for the Common Man" (Emerson, Lake & Palmer) at high volume, in a probably vain attempt to disturb our downstairs neighbor who is making our floor shake with *his* stereo. Good thing I like this piece, but my writing will likely lose

coherency fairly rapidly now. Bear with me.]

Guy Who? -Re yr ct Misha, If you feel the need for more information, then why don't you go out and find it? Public libraries are excellent sources of information, and university libraries are even better, in some cases, as I'm sure you know. Granted that it should not have been advertised as a "debate" when only one side was going to be presented, perhaps the organizers felt that the other side already had enough publicity— as I recall, Illinois hasn't ratified the amendment yet.

Equality of rights under the law shall not be abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

I suppose you approve of the 14th amendment? There's a striking similarity of both wording and intent there...

My own bias is fairly easy to detect, I imagine. I really don't relish the thought of being legally a second-class citizen in "the land of opportunity" due to an accident of birth.

[Now Jamie's playing Spyrogyra...]

Dr. Gonzo's E.E. -re ct Doug, Come to Anaheim, er, LA in '84, and we might be able to get you to Mt. Palomar. Now that I think of it, I've never been there myself. I'd kinda like to go.

I'd like to see the cause of WindyApa's "R" rating sometime. Maybe at Chicon?

Sorry this is so sparse an mc. RAE muchly. (For those that notice certain similarities of vocabulary in Jamie's and my zines, *he* picked that one up from *me*!)

Moral Tale -It takes a lot of courage to give up security and reach for a dream. At least you *tried*, even if it didn't ultimately work out for you. But what's next?

Mental Overload -Bravo comments re weapons!

I Wonder... -RAEBNC.

MuBetan -Another RAEBNC. I keep peace at home by agreeing with Jamie about the relative merits of UNIX and VMS.

Meromorphic Melange -Your launch sounds like a comedy of errors. It may have been awful, but it sure did make a good story.

re nuclear accidents, They (AEC, or whatever they're calling it these

days) have finally shut down San Onofre. Something to do with it being built on an active earthquake fault. (Find an earthquake fault in CA that *isn't* active!) Who the hell let So. Cal. Edison and SD Gas & Electric get away with *that* piece of stupidity? Or do I mean cupidity? It's not that I don't like nuclear power, but who'd want to live near a reactor built by the lowest-bidding contractor? You're quite right about the chemical dumps, but it doesn't sell newspapers, I'm afraid.

re closing questions, see later section.

Rites of Spring

Today is Memorial Day, the day when all the large civic organizations simply must have a picnic. This includes the American Legion, who occupied *en masse* the public park that is behind our apartment building. Our balcony overlooks the park; very pleasant when people aren't in evidence.

Because I didn't have to work today (Jamie did, though, poor thing), I did what any self-respecting LA fan does on a national holiday: I went up to Santa Monica to A Change of Hobbit. (I guess not many LA fans are self-respecting; the store was no more crowded than usual. That is to say, not at all.) Upon my return home, I was astonished by the noise level in the living room, and, not unreasonably, went to the window to see what on Earth was causing it. Parked directly below our balcony was a Coors beer truck, dispensing its noxious beverage to all who approached. A short ways away from that was a picnic table, surrounded by people 20 deep, all watching and loudly cheering some sort of eating contest. There was, I swear, at least 500 people in the immediate vicinity.

I was terribly tempted to yell something about gluttony being one of the seven deadly sins, but, being vastly outnumbered, I thought better of it. (Another first. I'm much too impulsive.) Having just this morning finished *The Sheep Look Up* (by John Brunner), images of starving, ill people were still floating through my head. HOW anyone could engage in something as innately wasteful as an eating contest is still beyond my comprehension almost 12 hours later. Maybe 12 years from now I'll understand it. Pizza-eating contests between the two largest SF organizations in San Diego would seem to be one of the major sources of San Diego's fannish activity and conflict (not over the waste, but over losing!) at the moment. Since I can't clarify my thoughts on the subject right now, I think I'd be better off leaving it alone for the time being. Comments?

Three Answers

Re the obsolescence of science fiction: We certainly do live in a "science-fiction world". Of course, that applied in 1969, too, and there is no dearth of SF being published these days. And the world will probably be increasingly more science-fictional, with, for example, more and more people getting access to computer networks of one sort or another. SF is not just a vehicle for

exploring/predicting advances in hardware, it is a means of examining people in extraordinary situations; it is even, if you will, something of a social conscience. (Note the abundance of disaster SF, not just the best-selling stuff.) As people evolve, so will the genre. I don't expect to see it become obsolete in my lifetime.

Re going to the stars: I assume you're not interested in the technological and financial reasons for going to space. Going to the *stars* is different. If I personally were offered the opportunity to go colonise a planet in a different system, I doubt I'd take it. (Heresy, I know. Oh well.)

Re developing artificial intelligence: Why not? Undoubtedly we'd learn something from it, if not about computer hardware, about people. And considering how messed up we are, it couldn't hurt.

Enough for now. I hope I'll have met all or most all of you at Chicon before I see your comments on this. I'm looking forward to it.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'O. R. H.' with a stylized, cursive flourish.

P.S. I've printed this thing several times now, and have gotten thoroughly disgusted with the formatting algorithms, which seem to positively *adore* leaving lone lines at the tops and bottoms of the pages. Aargh. I give up! I admit defeat!

THE RISE OF THE HOUSE OF ISHER

a zine written for apa-tech #19 by Donna Struwe, who can usually be found in
or around 530 W. Walnut St. Kalamazoo, Mi. 49007 (616) 342-4967

[illegible]

First I guess I'll go through #18 and make the appropriate comments.

Rod - re Ishercon - - - maybe this year?

Keith - re Museumcon - why couldn't you just say you didn't know how it works?

(I'd make a comment here about how old I've been feeling as of late, but I'd probably get in trouble.)

A1 - is it really tasteless white space if you're using colored paper?

John - liked the "Berry's World"

Paul - re directing at X-con - - great show! It was the highlight of the con.

(I know that being the highlight of that con wasn't hard, but don't let that take anything away from my first statement. I really enjoyed it.)

Bill R. - hope things are looking up by now.

Valli, Dick, and Bill H. - really nice CoA.

Jerry - re ct Bill L - there are other early risers in fandom. Out of 7 people in our room at X-con, 6 were up and dressed at 7:00 on Sunday morning.

Bill H. - re ct Al (mundane friends) - Since what you do in the mundane world, and what you do in the fannish world are somewhat different (at least for me)

I always end up telling stories about each group to the other.

Valli - re ct Mike - This year there will be no "shananigans and such" and no "tug of egos" as the people who caused it will not be hosting this years Ishercon.

As far as Tullio and I are concerned, if it's not too crowded for you, it's not too crowded for us. Virtually any and all of our friends (and ~~their~~ friends) are welcome to our parties. Hope you'll come so I can prove it to you!

Renee - let's not confuse the issue with the facts.

Clif - sometime I'll have to figure out who you are - we were both at Confusion, Capricon, Minicon (?), and Marcon. Maybe I'll see you at Ad Astra.

The Rise of the House of Isher page 2 --- party report

DECONTAMINATION or ISHERCON IV¹/₂-THE WRATH OF CONS sponsored by the Weapon Shops of Isher, Steve Salaba - Master of Movies, and Barry Gehm - Master Namer and cookie maker

The party started early with Bill Higgins and Roxanne coming in Thursday evening. We took a trip to Starworld and played some video games and pinball. Friday people started showing up around 7:00 and we all ordered pizza. Mike and Alice called at 5:00 and said "we're leaving now" We made helium blimps and sang filk songs till 4:00 AM, when Mike, Alice, and Shiela arrived with Dave Levine coming in 5 minutes later. Bill was hungry so a few of us went out to Denny's and everyone else crashed for the night.

Saturday morning brought the smell of green colored pancakes being cooked, while still more people arrived to join the fun. We all went to the library book sale, intending to come back in time to go see Star Trek The Wrath of Khan, but because of a misprint in the newspaper, many people missed the first showing, so we saw it in 2 groups. After everyone came back, we took off to Milham Park for a picnic and frisbee and volleyball and human pyramid building and playing in the playground on the swings and rocket slide.

The evening found us at Steve's playing charades and watching trailers of the movies he has, so we could decide what to see. The big surprise was a slide Steve had made with the Warner Brothers logo changed to a WS and having "The Weapon Shops of Isher presents"

The applause meter said that Dragonslayer and Time after Time won out, but a few of us left early to save our eyesight. We came home and played 'Dungeon!' a simplified D & D boardgame. And after 2 hours people decided they really couldn't sit through 2 movies anyway, so Time After Time will have to wait for another day.

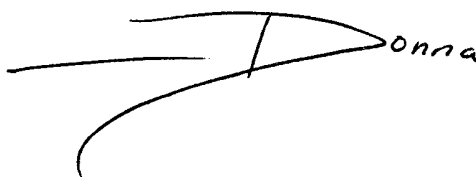
Back at the homefront, we all sat around and talked and played with helium balloons and talked and watched Nikki quilting and talked for a few more hours before finally crashing.

Sunday we made pancakes again (but this time without the green dye) and sang and talked some more. We sent off several balloons tied together with a foil rader reflector attached to it, then we all went to Baskin Robbins for ice cream. We had 2 6ft. weather balloons that Mark Hyde had gotten for us, and we blew one up to 5 ft diameter and sent that off with a trail of mylar, computer tape and foil.

Soon came many sad farewells, with only a few people still here. Sheila decided to stay with us for a week and meet up with Alice and Mike at Ad Astra to go back to Rochester. Lee Hart stayed till Monday afternoon, when he decided he should probably get back to work.

I suppose if people felt the urge to stay so long the party can be considered a success, I hope everyone had as much fun as we did, and we'll see you all at New Years!

much love -

 Donna

TRANSPORTER TOPICS

Rodford E. Smith
922 Belvoir Dr.
Frankfort, Ky. 40601
(502) 223-2119

Once more I have managed to wait intill the last minute. Ah, well,
on with the 'zine.

Bloody Cold Zine: Hello, Angel. Welcome back.

Quirkey (That's quarky) Sea: I have always had an urge to know not just what things did, but how. I loved Jules Vern as a kid because of his intricate explanations. I have also devoured such books as the Foxfire series and the Mother Earth News Handbook of Homemade Power. About Moosecon, I recently saw an article which suggested that people wanting cheap vacations should check with universities about using dorm facilities during vacation.

Chips at Sea: Just be glad that battery pack was not loaded with Nicads. I once had a guy throw a dead short across the twelve volt pack for one of my weapons while he was playing with it. I didn't even know anything was wrong until it started smoking. Fortunately, the leads were small and burned out quickly.

Singing Bear: The Definit Article is put out by Don and Maggie, of Beautifull Balloons fame. I don't have the adress, but if you or anyone you know subxscribe to the Buyer's Guide to Comic Fandom you can get their adress from thier monthly colum. By the way, do you know about the North American Doctor Whor Appreciation Society (NADWAS)? This is a branch of the official Doctor Who fan club, and reprints their club newsletter with additional local info.

Guylem Baardo?: Funny, I rarely Catch Karl Haas anymore, but I happened to hear part of that program. Yes, but have you seen the size of the Russian orbiter? About twice the size of the old Dyna-spar. Yes, we do handle traffic to and from all of the US and some points farther. Our Network has over six hundred centroids instate, with an additional two hundred outstate. On some sections of road crossing the state line up to half the traffic is through, with origin and destination both outside. Osamu Tezuka (pronounced "Teez-ka") is widely considered the Japanese Walt Disney. He is responsible for some of the most innovative animation work ever done. Tezuka created Astro Boy (known in Japan as Mighty Atom), Kimba the White Lion, and many other series and movies, most of which have not been seen widely in the States. See issue three of Comics Sceene magazine. About Helium Floride crystals: read "The Noble Gasses" by one A. Isamov. In it he talks about noble gas compounds, including Argon Fluoride crystals and others, as well as the possibility of helium compounds. It is possible that there may be a metastable helium compound. Barely. The Hydrogen/Fluorine reaction is the most powerful lasing mixture I know of. Small wonder, as reactive as they are.

What Happened to the Title?: Tullio a DM? This I gotta see. As a veteran of many a campaign, as player and reff, he has my sympathies. Maybe at some con we can have a GT Dungeon party.

Meromorphic Melange: about orbital debris: how about a biigg broom? Japanese Cartoons: cartoon/Fantasy Organization, the biggest of the lot, is headquartered in 401 Ala Brea Ave, Inglewood, Ca. 90301. Yearly membership is \$10, which buys you the bi-monthly newsletter. This is reviews of club activity in the various branches with a few notices. C/FO members have been responsible for the video room at the last few Worldcons.

SUPERSONIC PLANS!

Build The Roetem

Designed by Chuck Mund

The *Roetem* is an E-engine supersonic model rocket. The original *Roetem* was tracked at Mach 1.1 (920 MPH) on 18 June 1981.

Unlike the conventional airfoiled fins of subsonic rockets, supersonic fins are sanded to an acute wedge on both leading and trailing edges. The pointed nose cone is also typical of efficient supersonic design.

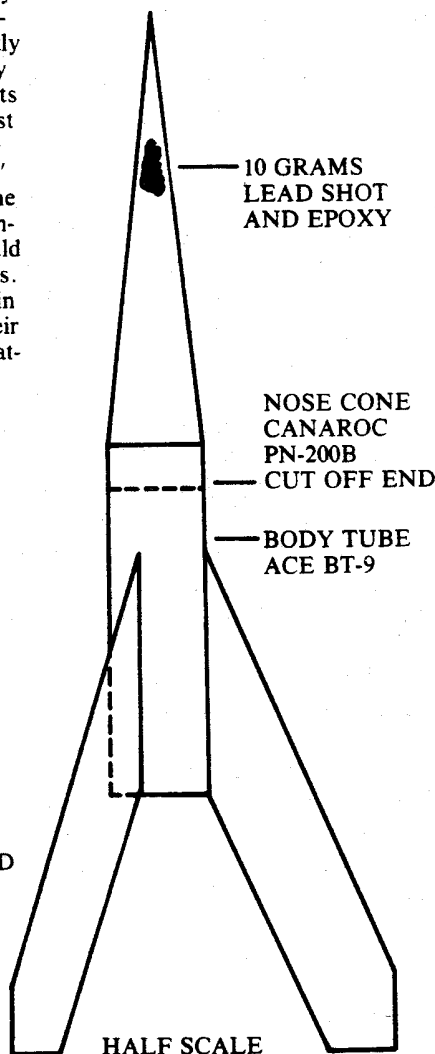
The fins and nose cone are attached with *Devcon* five-minute epoxy. The fin roots and nose cone joint should be smoothed and filleted with micro-balloons and epoxy.

The *Roetem* uses a Crown E45-10 engine. Because the nose cone is permanently attached, a tricky rear-ejection recovery system is used in which the engine ejects out the rear of the model and pulls the rest of the recovery system out after it. The *Roetem* is designed to carry a 2" x 40" Mylar streamer inside the nose cone. The shock cord should be anchored well up inside the nose cone, and the streamer should be well protected from the ejection gases. Modelers with no previous experience in rear-ejection recovery should perfect their technique on a sport model *first* before attempting to launch the pointed and ballasted *Roetem*.

FINS (MAKE 3)
3/32" PLYWOOD



FIN CROSS-SECTION



HALF SCALE

How about this? Yes, supersonic flights have been verified. Makes you wonder what they will do next. Orbital model rockets?

I just saw a program called "Computers Are People Too". The plot was crude and the editing too jumpy, but they had some really great computer graphics, including scenes from *Tron*. That movie looks to be worth seeing just for the special effects.

I had hoped to see *The Wrath of Kahn* tonight, then realised I was nearly out of time for AT. Hopefully there will be a review next time.

Why should we visit the stars? Not for materials, and almost certainly not to relieve population pressures. The main reason will be because of the chance to see something different. So far we have based all our planetary formation and evolution theories on one set of data, much of which has not even been directly explored. The chance to get another viewpoint is too important to be ignored. There is no way of telling just how important, and in what ways, until we get there. We have to know what is there before we can make a decision on whether to go or not, so we must go there, either in person or by electronic proxy.

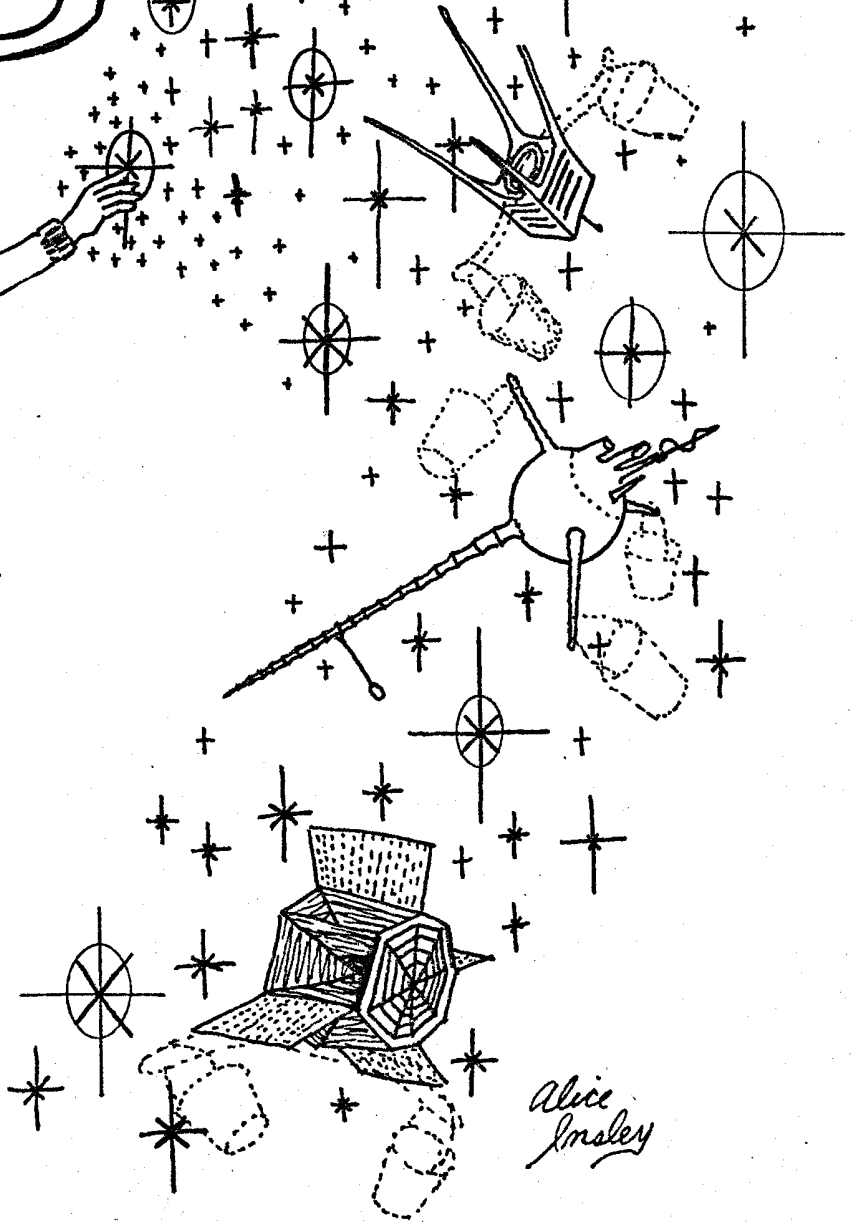
Ah, well, enough philosophy. See you next issue.

Red

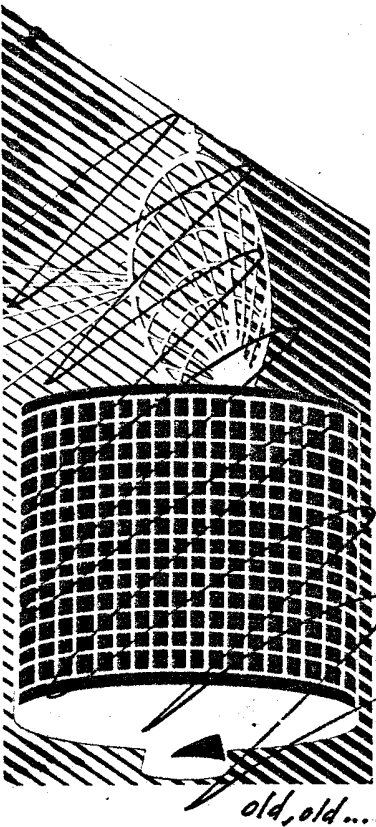
model Rocketeer

May 1982 Vol 24, # 5

Quintessential Singularity # 18



Alice
Smiley



WESTAR

STATUS BULLETIN



Date: 9 June 1982

Time: 9 PM EDT

Well, they got another one 'o them things off'n the ground... Westar-II was launched on June 8th at 8:24:00.190 PM EDT from the Cape. It's been placed in an elliptical transfer orbit with a period of 10.56 hrs. and a perigee of under 110 miles (a bit lower than intended...). At around 5:30 PM EDT on Friday, June 11th, Five will be taken out off transfer orbit at seventh apogee over 146° West and will be allowed to drift to 139° W. It should reach this test site on Monday, June 14th, where the antenna reflector and solar panel steeve, now folded down, will be deployed and communications tests will be conducted. On July 11th, the satellite will be moved on to 123° West, where it will be stopped and put into commercial service on July 20th.

Right after that's done, we'll start moving Two from 123.5 to 79° W.; Management's intention is to reach the new station by August 30th, but we will have to disabuse them of this fantasy. (Besides, it would cut into my Chicago visit...) Meanwhile, One is toodling along toward 79°; it passed 82° W. today. We already started slowing it down on June 1st and should have it stopped altogether on July 1st (one less thing to worry about on Independence Day weekend...).

Of course this is scribbly - it's a BULLETIN!

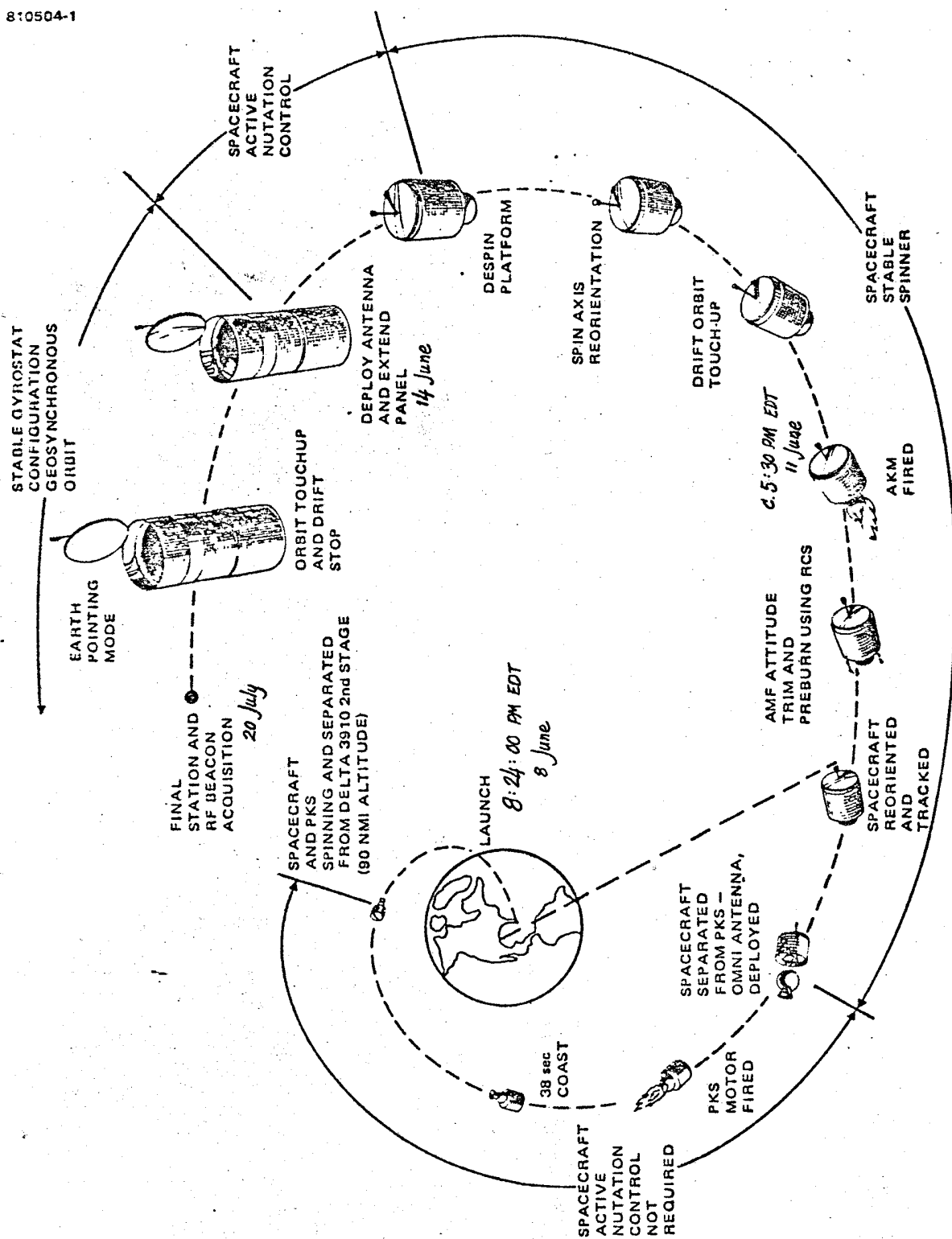


FIGURE 1-1. DELTA LAUNCH SEQUENCE

Launch Schedule

FLIGHT ASSIGNMENTS ON ARIANE LAUNCH VEHICLES (1982-1986)

LAUNCH DATE (*)	FLIGHT NO. (VEHICLE)	SATELLITE (ORGANIZATION) (**)	MISSION (ORBIT) (***)
1982 Sept.	ARIANE L 5 (AR 1/SYDLA)	MARECS B (INMARSAT/ESA) + SIRIO 2 (ESA)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO) METEO DATA (GTO)
1982 Nov. (1)	ARIANE L 6 (AR 1/P 07)	EXOSAT (ESA) + 4th solid stage	ASTRONOMY (72 DEG. INCL ELLIPTIC)
1983 Jan.	ARIANE L 7 (AR 1/SYDLA)	OSCAR 9B (AMSAT) + ECS 1 (EUTELSAT/ESA)	RADIO-AMATEUR (GTO) COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
1983 March	ARIANE L 8 (AR 1)	INTELSAT V P7 (INTELSAT)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
1983 May	ARIANE L 9 (AR 1)	INTELSAT V P8 (INTELSAT)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
1983 July or Aug. (2)	ARIANE L 10 (AR 1)	INTELSAT V P9 (INTELSAT)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
1983 Oct. (2) (3)	ARIANE L 11 (AR 3/SYDLA)	ECS 2 (EUTELSAT/ESA) + TELECOM 1A (DGT-FRANCE)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO) COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
1983 Dec. (4)	ARIANE L 12 (AR 3/SYDLA)	WESTAR 6 (WESTERN UNION) + TELECOM 1B (DGT-FRANCE)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO) COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
1984 Feb. (5)	ARIANE L 13 (AR 3/SYDLA)	SPACENET 1 (SPCC-USA) + ARABSAT 1 (ASCO)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO) COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
1984 May (5)	ARIANE L 14 (AR 3/SYDLA)	GSTAR 1 (GTE-USA) +	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO) COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
1984 Aug.	ARIANE L 15 (AR 3/SYDLA)	GSTAR 2 (GTE-USA) + SPACENET 2 (SPCC-USA)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO) COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
1984 Oct. (3)	ARIANE L 16 (AR 1)	SPOT 1 (CNES/SPOT-IMAGE) + VIKING (SSC-SWEDEN)	EARTH OBSERVATION (SSO) SCIENCE (ELLIPTIC)
1984 Dec	ARIANE L X (AR 2 or AR 3)	RELAUNCH OPPORTUNITY	---
1985 Feb. (6)	ARIANE L 17 (AR 3/SYDLA)	SBTS 1 (EMBRATEL-BRAZIL) + (SPACENET 3 - SPCC USA)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO) COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
1985 March	ARIANE L 18 (AR 2)	INTELSAT VA P 14 (INTELSAT)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
1985 May	ARIANE L 19 (AR 2)	TV-SAT (GERMANY)	TELEVISION (GTO)
1985 June (7)	ARIANE L 20 (AR 2)	INTELSAT VA P 15 (INTELSAT)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
1985 July (8)	ARIANE L 21 (AR 3/SYDLA)	GIOTTO (ESA) + (STC 1 - COMSAT-USA)	COMETARY PROBE (GTO) TELEVISION (GTO)
1985 Aug. (9)	ARIANE L 22 (AR 3/SYDLA)	(AUSSAT 1 - AUSTRALIA) + SBTS 2 (EMBRATEL-BRAZIL)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO) COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
1985 Sept. (7)	ARIANE L 23 (AR 2)	TDP-1 (FRANCE)	TELEVISION (GTO)
1985 Oct. (10)	ARIANE L 24 (AR 44L 7)	ESA or CNES PAYLOAD ?	SCIENCE (GTO)
1985 Dec.	ARIANE L 25 (AR 3/SYDLA)	(AUSSAT 2 - AUSTRALIA) + (ANIX D - TELESAT)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO) COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
1986 (****) Jan./Feb.	ARIANE L 26 (AR 3/SYDLA)	(HALLEY 1A - UNITED KINGDOM) + ?	TELEVISION (GTO)
Feb./March	ARIANE L 27 (AR 4 7)	L-SAT (ESA)	COMMUNICATIONS + TELEVISION (GTO)
March/April	ARIANE L 28 (AR 4 7)	(LUXSAT - CLT LUXEMBOURG) + (DBS CORP 1 - USA)	TELEVISION (GTO) TELEVISION (GTO)
April/May (11)	ARIANE L 29 (AR 44L)	(INTELSAT VI F1 - INTELSAT)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
May/June	ARIANE L 30 (AR 2 7)	SPOT 2 (SPOT-IMAGE) +	EARTH OBSERVATION (SSO)
June/July	ARIANE L 31 (AR 4 7)	(HALLEY 1B - UNITED KING- DOM) + (TELE-X - SWEDEN)	TELEVISION (GTO) TELEVISION (GTO)
July/Aug. (11)	ARIANE L 32 (AR 44L)	(INTELSAT VI F2 - INTELSAT)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)
Sept./Oct.	ARIANE L 33 (AR 4 7)	(DBS CORP 2 - USA) +	TELEVISION (GTO)
Oct./Nov.	ARIANE L 34 (AR 4 7)	FREE OPPORTUNITY	---
Nov./Dec. (11)	ARIANE L 35 (AR 44L)	(INTELSAT VI F3 - INTELSAT)	COMMUNICATIONS (GTO)

NOTES

(*) This calendar has 2 crucial launch dates: for EXOSAT, Nov. 1982 (L 6 flight) and for GIOTTO, July 1985 (L 21 flight). Second launch complex at Kourou will be used in 1985 and will authorize growing rhythm of launch operations.

Remarks:

- (1) L 6 flight is scheduled just 2 months after L 5; for first time, it will test recovery of first Ariane stage.
- (2) To launch 3rd Intelsat V on 3 consecutive launchings would be an interesting opportunity for launch operations, but it's also planned for time opportunity (pending on satellite preparation) to use L 10 flight for one spacecraft, ECS-2 or TELECOM 1A.
- (3) L 11 flight, first under responsibility of Arianespace company, was first planned with last Ariane 1 vehicle; it's actually discussed about possibility of using first Ariane 3/SYDLA to launch 2 satellites and of delaying use of last Ariane 1 for SPOT 1 and Viking in Oct. 1984. Four types of operations are evaluated:
 - with one Ariane 3, dual launch of ECS-2 and of TELECOM 1A or TELECOM 1B.
 - with Ariane 1, launch of INTELSAT V P9 or of ECS-2 or of TELECOM 1A.
- (4) L 12 flight will launch WESTAR 6; this satellite can be accompanied by TELECOM 1A or by TELECOM 1B or by ECS-2.
- (5) L 13 flight will launch SPACENET 1; this satellite can be accompanied by ARABSAT 1 or by TELECOM 1B. It's also possible to launch ARABSAT 1 with GSTAR 1 on L 14 flight.
- (6) Launch of SBTS 1 is still under negotiation, while this of SPACENET 3 isn't yet decided by SPCC, nor approved by FCC.
- (7) L 20 flight can also be used to launch French TDF-1; this will depend on status of Intelsat VA preparation.
- (8) L 21 flight is required for this date, to put GIOTTO probe in interplanetary trajectory for rendezvous in March 1986 with Halley Comet. GIOTTO will be launched first into geostationary transfer orbit and from here fired to gain interplanetary trajectory. It can be launched, using SYDLA equipment, with another satellite: First STC 1 of COMSAT General or ECS 3 for Eutelsat or AUSSAT 1 for Australia or SBTS 2 for EMBRATEL-Brazil.
- (9) Australia hasn't yet confirmed use of Ariane for first AUSSAT spacecraft.
- (10) It isn't yet decided which model of Ariane 4 will be tested during demonstration test of 1985. It's certain that this Ariane 4 will be equipped with liquid boosters. Actually discussed is payload to be launched during this test: CNES is proposing a heavy astronomical satellite, named SIGMA. Some French students are envisioning this launch for an international Earth Moon competition with solar sailing systems.
- (11) Launch opportunity not yet reserved by Intelsat but slot proposed by Arianespace for Intelsat VI launch.

(**) Explanation of abbreviations used in table:

ASCO (Arab Satellite Communication Organisation) - CNES (Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales) - DGT (Direction Générale des Télécommunications) - ECS (European Communication Satellite) - ESA (European Space Agency) - GTE (General Telephone & Electronics) - DBS (Direct Broadcasting Satellite) - SBTS (Sistema Brasileiro de Telecomunicacoes por Satélite) - SPCC (Southern Pacific Communications Corp.) - SPOT (Satellite pour l'Observation de la Terre) - SSC (Swedish Space Corporation) - TDF (Télédiffusion de France) - CLT (Compagnie Luxembourgeoise de Télédiffusion).

(***) We have mentioned most important mission of satellite to be launched by Ariane and we have given an indication concerning targeted orbit: GTO (Geostationary Transfer Orbit, between 200 & 36,000 km, near equatorial line) - SSO (Sun Synchronous Orbit, circular at 830 altitude, polar trajectory).

(****) Launch operations during 1986 are described only in a tentative launch calendar and are subject to modifications, related to next and potential orders of launchings to Arianespace. Note that 2nd launch complex of Kourou will permit 10 launch operations per year.

MAY 31, 1982

SATELLITE WEEK

THE Quintessential Singularity 18

9 June 1982 for the Third Anniversary Issue of APA-TECH

being a journal of complex, imaginary, and irrational studies produced by The Center for Spaced Research, a division of Ossa-on-Pelion RR 1, Box 390, Apt. 5, Hamburg, New Jersey 07419 (201)-827-6111 Gregory Ruffa, Director and Principal Exterminator

Ossa-on-Pelion Headquarters: 1220 Lenape Way, Scotch Plains, New Jersey 07076 (201)-753-9207

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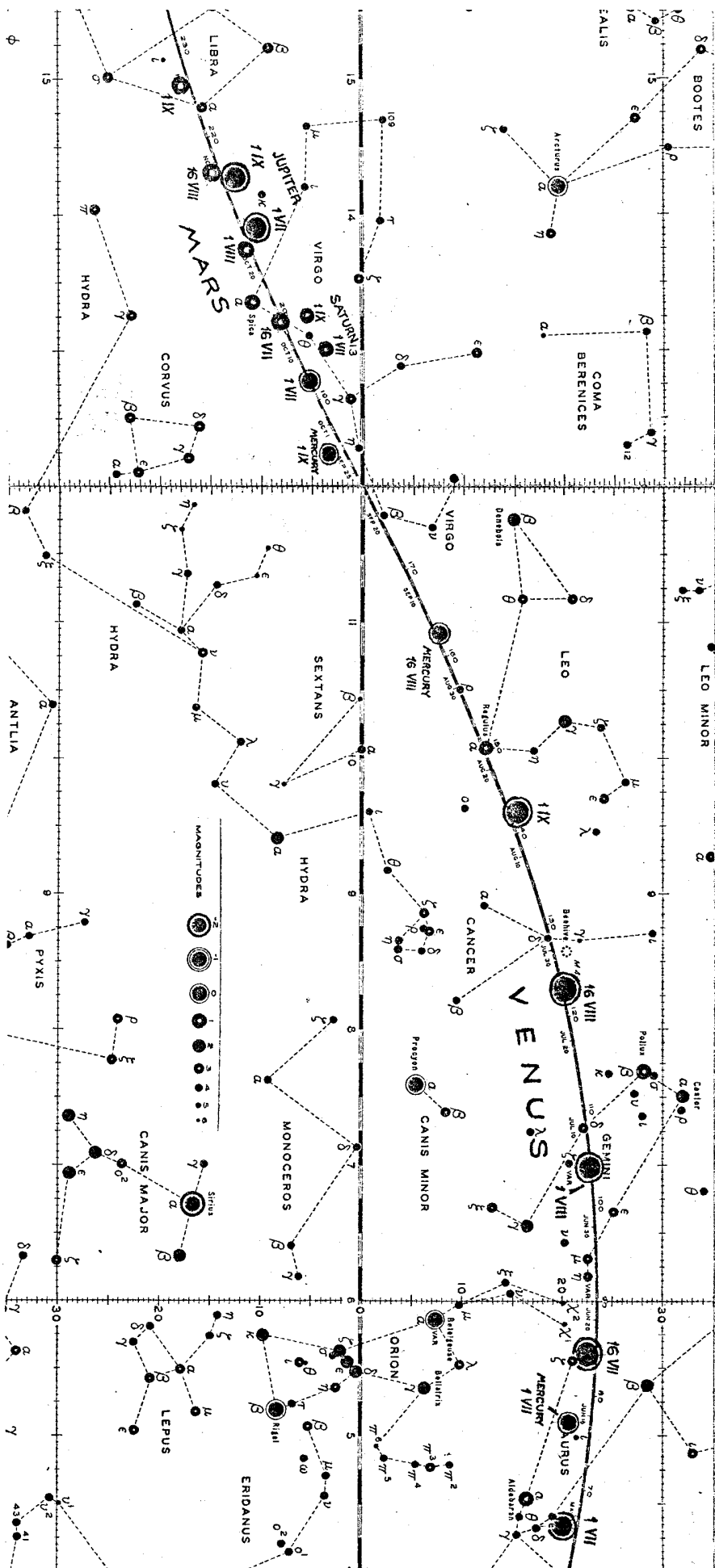
Let's see... what else has been going on around here? I'm on Orbital Dynamics support duty again for this launch, which means coming in from 7 PM to 7 AM all this week (my turn for the night shift) in case the Hughes people need some help (How can they need help? All eight of them come out for the launch!). What better time to sit down at last to finish off this issue I've been trying to write since I got back from the Midwest?

The tidal wave I've had an eye on for months finally came crashing down this past week. I returned from Illinois on the 25th (my car was still in the shop the day before) and was catching up with things at work, when I got a call from Orange Cat College. "The grades for your course are due today," Morris purred. "That's nice -- I haven't even picked up the final exams yet!" "Well, we put a memo in your mailbox..." "Swell, I've been out of town since the 13th." "Well, we'll have to issue Incompletes to your students until you get the grades in." "Can't be helped..." Terrific -- if they knew when the grade deadline was going to be, why couldn't they tell me a month earlier? The graduating students were in a panic as I spent the next week shuffling through take-home tests and miscellaneous papers. At the same time, I had to spend extra hours at work twiddling Westar-One so the future work we'd have to do on it wouldn't conflict with the launch requirements for Five. The first week of June was spent getting the routine stuff out of the way for Two and Three so they could be left alone this week. I also had back-to-back talks to give on the nights of the 6th and the 8th (I missed the launch: aw,shucks ...) since I'd made those commitments months ago.

I'll be somewhat tied to this place for the next few weeks, so I can't make any travel plans until late in July. I want to visit Boston and maybe Rochester once this summer before the next Big Trip to Illinois. I still have a couple spaces left in my doubles at the Hyatt; I'll be there starting Wednesday afternoon. After Labor Day, I'm planning on going down to Chambana for the week: that may be my last visit there in some time (then again...). I have plans to go to Conclave in November, but that will depend upon where I am then...

* * *

A couple weeks after Boskone, I went to the 25th Lunacon. I saw a few New York and Boston people I know, including one of my astronomy students (who also showed up at Boskone!), but otherwise it was a big nothing. I did learn of the Museum of the Surreal and Fantastique in Manhattan; they were running a Giger exhibit in one



THE PLANETS -- 1 JULY TO 1 SEPTEMBER

Mercury makes its transition from morning to evening star during the month of July; it will join the other evening planets by late August, but will be extremely low in the west at sunset. Venus remains a morning star during this interval, being low in the east at sunrise, but will drop progressively closer to the horizon each morning as September approaches. Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn remain together in Virgo, with Mars overtaking Jupiter on August 10th; the three planets are seen to the west at sunset, becoming rather low to the horizon by early September.

A total eclipse of the Moon will be visible in the United States during the early morning hours of July 6th. This particular eclipse is distinguished by the fact that the Moon will pass almost precisely through the center of Earth's umbra; the eclipse will be quite long in duration and the full Moon should nearly vanish. Entry into the penumbra occurs at 12:22 AM EDT; entry into umbra - 1:33; mid-eclipse - 3:31; departure from umbra - 5:29; exit from penumbra - 6:40 AM EDT.

of the hotel rooms. I want to hit the place on my next trip to the City, along with the Museum of Holography and Forbidden Planet (nice little neighborhood). I'll report any interesting findings...

Marcon was sooo quiet. It was nice to see those people from Illinois who troubled to come (as for the rest of you, that's OK... we don't mind...this once). I think the attendance was about half of what it was last year. I joined the John Nine Raiding Party on Saturday, during which various bookstores were pillaged, but less satisfyingly than in past times. John may have very nearly cleaned out Columbus... There was the obligatory trip to the French Market earlier that day; the place has undergone significant change, since many of the shoppes have been moved to the fake European town next door. A lot of time was spent milling about the hotel talking with people at random; there were no significant group activities that I saw, save for some fine dining. (Speaking of such, who's setting up the Chicon Dining Tour? I believe there are plans for one formal evening.)

On the night of May 13th, I was met at O'Hare by Bill-Aytch in his rented jalopy, his regular vehicle having tired of possessing moving engine parts. We parked in quite another part of town next to an auto parts place. One of my roommates used to warn me about neighborhoods like that; I should have heeded him, for I found myself at Thursdaynight. I realized I was in trouble the moment I came in through the door. I saw Jerry Corrigan, Jeff Sekiya and two other folks at a card table and Bill Roper pointing at me, shouting, "There he is!" Yes, I was confronted by one of the most dangerous social groups on Earth: (4N + 3) bridge players. I settled in for a rubber with Roper as partner; I managed to bring things to a close through the expedient of destroying a perfectly contract of his by holding no face cards in my hand (well, I didn't bid...). The rest of the meeting I spent amidst the Eisenstein groupies (that's what their shirts said). Afterwards, I was taken to an old traditional wee-hours brunch at Selden's, where our table was already waiting. Thence we departed to Higgins' rat's-n --er, rooms, where we spent the night plotting to overthrow the Government or the BIS or Arianespace or somebody, until Bullwinkle came on. At this point, I fear I dozed off (that's all right, I knew how it comes out: Wossamotta wins!).

Friday, we slept in (what better place?) and/or talked until around four o'clock, when we decided that Somebody Ought To Do Something. We were joined for dinner by Bill-El; later, Jerry arrived for the Caboose-climbing and Victuals-securing Trip, during which we encountered an Infinite-Speed Fan (which is not someone faster than Jittlov). At various points, Valli and Dick also stopped in; many cookies, strawberries, and ice creams perished that night... I snuck off to a dark corner by three.

The next day was good for staying inside, while Outside worked itself into a frenzy. In a crash of thunder and lightning, one of Bill's friends from Colorado appeared at the door, en route to Detroit on a Mission From God (or so he said). Bill has many interesting friends.... We took off for Chicago around dinnertime. I was left off at the C/FO meeting to meet Bill-El and watch various folks have at it with starships and large servomechanisms. Dick and Valli put up with me for the night in their huge new digs.

Sunday, I busied myself until the residents awoke. Valli had to go off to work; Dick and I went to Eric's Delicatessen (all right, I'll highly recommend it, too), to the Circle Campus area for cante-loupe ice, and to the bus station. I reached Champaign by six, pursued by nasty thunderstorms with sharp fangs, just in time to miss the folks I was supposed to meet. I roused Rolf from a sound dinner to come after me; I caught up with the other people, who were only in town for Commencement, much later.

My main purpose in coming downstate, however, was to act as best man at Rolf and Mary's wedding. I spent the week gadding about with assorted ChUSFAns, visiting libraries, and practicing some of my flashier ring-passing maneuvers. Rolf and I drove out to his family's farm in Argenta; we joined up with the rest of the wedding party for the rehearsal at the church and returned to Champaign for dinner at the China Inn with the various family members. Late that night, the Gang of Five blew in from Chicago: Jerry, Doug and Gretchen, and Bills-L & H; Dave Marquart also arrived from Minnesota. Many jelly beans, yogurt raisins, and ice creams perished...etc,etc.

Whatcon III (Rolf'n'MaryCon) was a grand success. Everyone enjoyed the wedding and the reception. After we jammed too many Chicagoans into a bitty little car bound for Milwaukee (where they attained fame as the Hunchbacks of X-Con), some of us raced off to another wedding for the fellow I co-taught a history of science course with for two years. Those of us still in town that evening went over to Hotel California, where we just...sat...quietly...for a while.

Jeff, Jerry, Dave and I went back to the China Inn for lunch on Sunday and then all headed North. I liked my extended tour of the state, but a trip that long takes a lot out of you. I'd had only about six hours sleep each night, so I was a bit wiped out by the time I flew away. I can hardly wait for August!

* * *

POLES OF ORDER 1 --

555: I reiterate my offer to compile AI #20. August should be reasonably quiet for me; I know not what October holds... Once again, I will provide 2¢ Xeroxing and hope the ol' 4000 is up to it this go-around.

HALF A BARN ONWARD: Congratulations upon your re-entry into Academia! If I don't get a decent offer soon, I may hang on here until April, put aside some money, and (try to) go back to grad school next year. I don't envy you your coming cross-country drive, though!

LEPORINE LETTERS: Your opening comment reminded me of the Italian prophet who had predicted that the World would end on a particular date in the late 1500's. The time, of course, came and went. When challenged about it afterwards, he responded that the World had indeed come to an end, but no one had noticed.

The weather's been acting screwy for the past five years. Actually, I find this year reminiscent of the weather we used to have in the mid-1960's: late springs, snow on the ground on Easter Sunday, summer weeks in the hundreds (uh oh)...

If the lights go out at night, I fumble for a book, get in my car, and go somewhere that does have light. If it's really late, I decide I wanted to sleep anyway...

It amuses me to read all the comments from people about their love-hate relationships with cities. I feel that if you try to acquaint yourself with the place before you first visit it, it is easier to feel comfortable. Of course, I wouldn't walk around New York or Chicago alone late at night (parts of Boston, maybe). Above all, never stand in Times Square consulting a map with a camera hanging around your neck.

Is it the impersonality, the level of activity, the crime problem, or something else which disturbs you about cities?

DEAR IRRITA-BILL: Your experience with looking for that first full-time job is certainly familiar enough. Companies want people with experience, but don't want to spend their money providing anyone with that experience. It also seems that once you get that first job, it is suddenly extremely easy to get another one, regardless of what you were doing before; the personnel folks want to be sure you are employable and responsible.

A big problem in getting your foot in the door with personnel managers is that they rarely know what the job really entails. They are handed a job description and set out to find someone who exactly fits into that little box. I was able to figure out from an interview that the person I was talking to probably didn't really know what went on back in the shop. They did "know," however, that I wasn't the person described in the box. I agree with you about lying at interviews. I think one should try to present an honest picture of one's abilities. Lies about your background have a way of catching up with you later. You can use the interview to find out if you really want to work at a particular place. If the company can't employ representatives who do nothing more than ask a lot of fool questions and can't answer a few pertinent ones, you are better off elsewhere. They are hiring you, but you have to work with them. (Personally, I agree with Robert Townsend in his "Up the Organization" books. Managers should boot their personnel departments and do the hiring themselves: they know who they're looking for.)

Good luck to you! It's certainly no consolation, but it took me nine months from the time I started writing until I got work here (and that was by chance). You are getting lessons in how American business really works. (Why this Administration puts so much faith in it is beyond me...)

Ann Landers

HIER STEH' ICH: Your last contribution must be at least the fourth place I've seen that goofy quiz. Where did it come from originally?

RIMSKY & KORSAKOV?: Please do continue summarizing AW & ST. You've been doing the issues before I started stealing our copy out of the mail at work each week (and I don't get to it in time every week...).

DR. G'S SEGMENT SWAP: No need to remove your APA cover -- I still have a few extras of the Dickinson cover that I can send to you folks. (Send a postcard to: COVER, c/o CSR, Hamburg, USA)

In the hotel room at Marcon, I saw an episode of some cartoon show where something set Skylab (yeh...I know) careening out into space from its nice, safe low-Earth-orbit. Seemingly within minutes, it appeared destined to plunge straight into the Sun (!), spelling certain doom for its two occupants. Our heroes set off after it, lassoed the wayward vessel, and towed it swiftly back to orbit around Earth again. Whew! A world-view that would have done Anaxagoras proud. As a professional astrodynamacist, I was appalled.

MUST BE A MORAL: Why should you have had to justify your life and occupation to other people? What's so "respectable" about, say, paper-pushing?

Another bit of advice that could be offered is not to go into business for yourself expecting to make lots of money right away. If you don't have something to back yourself up with for a few years, you're asking for trouble. (My father started a spin-off of his main work three years ago and it is just now starting to break even.)

I'm sorry things couldn't work out for you folks for whatever the reasons.

MENTAL OVERLOAD: I almost fell out of my chair laughing (OK, OK... I was standing and almost fell down...) when I read your remark about "cliquishness." That's the first time I've ever heard anyone cite it as an asset! I understand your reasoning, though.

MUBETAN: Hey, Mikey, the next time you come whistling down I-81 on the way to Trenton (or someplace like it), stop over here and say "hello" (if I'm still here -- otherwise...don't).

POLES OF ORDER 2 --

CONVEYOR OF CATEGORIES: I trust, if you went to the Marcon art show, that you found out who Dexter Dickinson is.

Part of your story's premise also appears in van Vogt's "Far Centaurus." One wonders, however, why a civilization with Known Space FTL (as opposed to, say, Alderson FTL) wouldn't just chase down all the old probes and turn them off before they became menaces.

I think nuclear fission is, at least marginally, within our ability to make safe, but standard industrial attitudes toward maintenance and training render this unlikely. (I wouldn't run a reactor the way we run our satellites...)

If VOIR winds up taking longer, we'd better hope we can keep up the funding to listen to it long enough.

The name you are groping for of the fellow groping for purchase on the clockface is Harold Lloyd.

...AND A NAVSTAR TO STEER IT BY: I am going to take strong exception to your remark about Morton Subotnick. He is exploring new sorts of formal musical structures made possible by synthesizers and other electronic means. He has made much greater use of the potential of such instruments than many who have simply used them as devices upon which to perform transcriptions. One has to listen for very different sorts of things from what one does in most of the other recordings you noted. (What?! No Jean Michael Jarré??)

Thanks for the invitation and map to WHOI. Maybe I'll even get there this summer?

LEPORINE LETTERS: Murder, Inc.? 'Ey, I happen to be East Coast Sales Manager....

SING HOI: Don't feel compelled to join GT. You aren't missing anything much that you don't already have access to through the folks you know. I made that comment in the Table of Contents when I realized that at least three people on the Roster were not members, in evident contradiction to the usual masthead -- not that it bothers me any...

IRRITA-BILL: I want to give the present editorial arrangement a chance for a while. Perhaps things will stay on track better if there is less burden upon just one person. I would not base APA-TECH in Chicago just because it has a plurality of the members. (Besides, you guys already have two APAs -- where once were none.)

Oh... and you only have one Chambana member now. Mr. Sekiya has joined the generally northeastward migration of GT. If Mike and Alice hold on long enough, everyone else will be in Rochester in five years...

RIMSKY & KORSAKOV?: Yes, and the "Mr. Ed Interstellar Counter-Strike Expeditionary Force" should be here around 1998 (assuming they aren't beaten to the punch by the "I Love Lucy I.C.S.E.F.").

Sorry, I didn't even consider relations with the Deep South. The War Between the States never ended: it just went underground...

We did discuss Daedalus at your place last month, but, for the record... I feel that the first probe should go to Alpha Centauri not simply because it's closer, but because, being a ternary star system, it is potentially far more interesting than Barnard's Star. One of the things I object to about the mission plan is that, after spending ten to twenty years building the ship and mining Jupiter for helium-3 and forty years in transit, the ship passes through the neighborhood of Barnard's Star in less than two days, which is about 0.01% of the whole project. Even Voyager-Saturn was good for 0.1% and it had already been to Jupiter. I don't see us indulging in interstellar exploration until it becomes a lot cheaper.

Something that might help would be to deploy a solar sail to brake the ship into the destination system. I'd really like to conduct a design study here, but it is past 5 AM, my mind is not presently up to it, and I am running out of page. Later?

Ditto on talking about Tipler-versus-the-world or a list of sky objects for dinky 'scopes. Next time...

If those Worldcon folks don't watch it, it's going to become known as Land-of-the-Stinking-Weed-con...

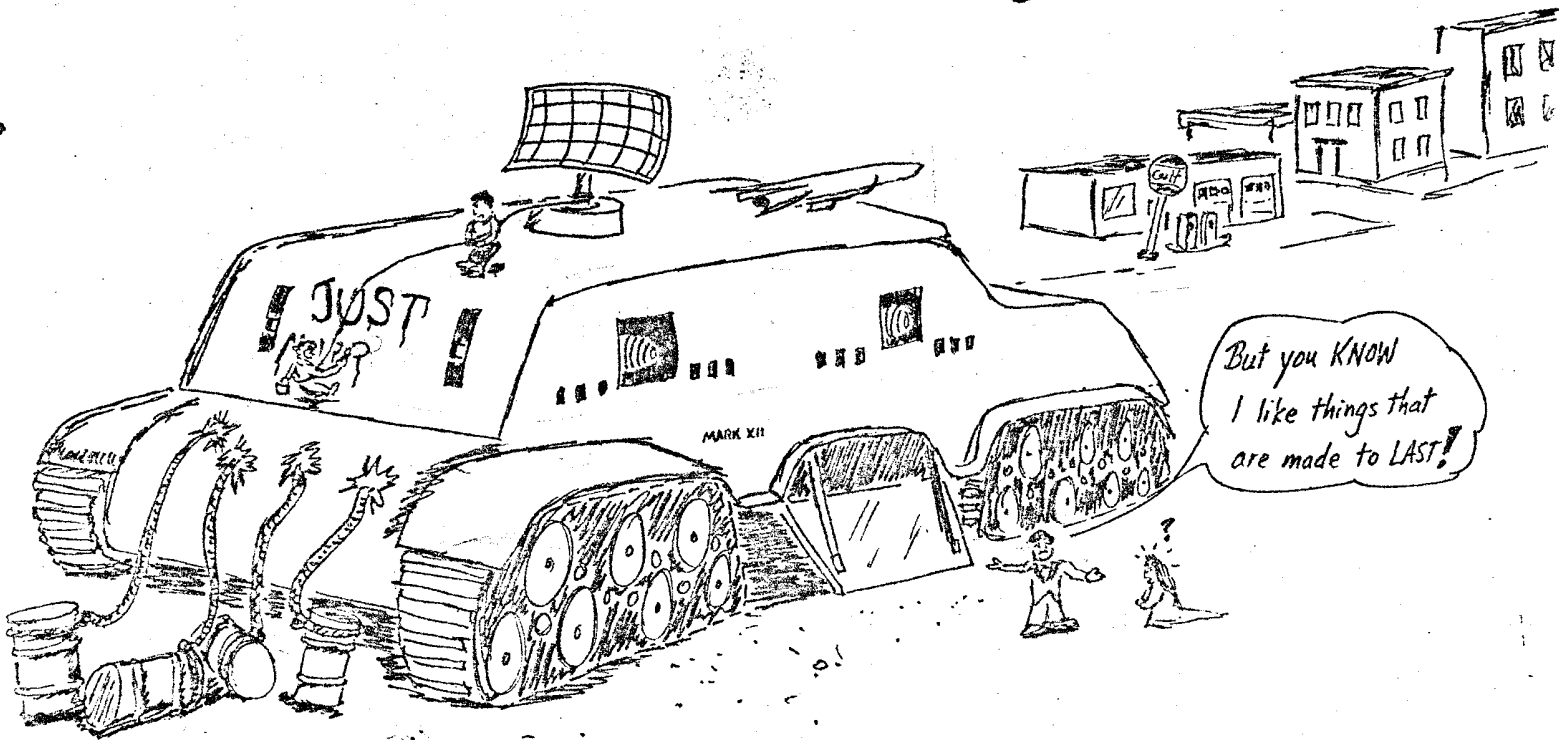
* * *

Oops, sorry, dozed off...they'll be serving breakfast here soon and I'd like to get some this time. Lots to come next time. Take care. See you all here and in September. Green boards!

Rolf'n'MaryCon (Whatcon? III)

May 22, 1982

Argenta, Illinois



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Upon returning from Capricon, I found A-T 17 hiding in my mailbox. Now, almost immediately after returning from Marcon I find receive A-T 18. I detect a pattern. Now I just have to continue observations for a while and see if it continues...

Life in the recent past has been its usual mix of boring and frantic. My job puts me in charge of keeping all the machinery running, in between writing system type code, and low level software tools for the applications programmers, and an occasional applications program in my copious spare time. In my other spare time, I've been trying to sift through the various mini and micro computers and decide what one we can afford now, and grow with in the future. I finally ended up with the Motorola Exormacs, after looking at just about everybody from Apollo to Wicat.

A stupid I discovered Motorola did (and I can't understand), is to commission Hitachi to write the Fortran Compiler for the Exormacs system as part of their second source agreement. Last time I looked, even the Japanese admitted that the Americans were their superior in producing quality software. Any how, Quality is more than just lacking in the Fortran compiler. We ran the same benchmark in both their Pascal and Fortran, and it ran almost 10 times faster in the Pascal. And also compiled faster.

Changing subjects. Marcon was... so-so. I'm not sure if it was the con, the lack of some of the people I usually hang around with, or just me, but I had a barely enjoyable weekend. I can't think of anything in particular that happened, except that I think I slept almost enough.

Mini-con was a bit more fun, even though we did share the hotel with miniature mounted orcs. (Truth to be told, I had no problem with them, and didn't meet anyone who did.) Explaining that line about orcs a bit. There was a convention of BMX'ers in the Hotel with us. BMX is bicycle Moto-Cross. Silly little bikes with 18" wheels and Hi-rise handle-bars being ridden through torture routes by 8-12 year olds. I never saw one of the kids with-out his mount, be it in an elevator, on a street or in a stairwell. Ah well, I have less reason to comment on that oddity than most fen, since I remember fondly many nights when I slept with my bike. (Bike touring/camping with a 5x7 tent on a rainy night. You can't leave the bike in the rain!!!)

Highlights of Mini-con... Well, we started out on Thursday evening, Me, Greg Cronau, and Dave & Karen Coupland. Greg is a fan from Pittsburg area that people may have met, while Dave is a fellow employee who reads SF but never hit a con. His wife is another non-fan reader. The reason for Dave & Karen is that we were on a business trip, going to Minneapolis to visit Apollo Computers, inc. on Monday after Easter. Dave & Karen have relatives in Minn. to visit, and I had Minicon.

So, after becomming not lost, but sure we were we arrived at Bill

Roper's for the first rendezvous. Thursday night meeting is in full swing. I forgot to warn Dave & Karen about this. I think they took it in stride, but a bursting at the doors party full of strangers was not what they expected.

The following morning, we were off... Me driving, following Bill. Bill gives directions like this ... "follow me". Then he runs through a yellow light.

Despite his best efforts, I followed him all the way to Madison, where we picked up Lynne-Anne Morse. Now Mike Walsh takes the wheel, and having FNG in his car, he leads. "Follow me", and the now traditional yellow light. With the aid of the CB, I follow him.

They eventually get on the freeway, while I'm six traffic lights behind them. We get on the freeway eventually, and start playing "we're at mile marker N, where are you".

They're six miles ahead. At the next marker, they're seven miles ahead. I suggest that maybe it would be nice to hold the velocity below C. Mike apologises. He hit a break in traffic and old LA driving habits surfaced.

At the next mile marker, they're 8 miles ahead. "Ooops", says Mike. Then 9, and finally 12 miles ahead of us.

Meanwhile, we're stuck in the middle of a pack of little old ladies going 45 mph and filling both lanes to do it.

And, before they get to the next mile marker, the CB says (in Bill's voice), "Uhh, Clif. We got troubles".

"Elucidate"

"Flashing red lights, pulling us over."

"Well, your lucky. They take Mastercharge in this state"

Bill is not amused by that observation.

We proceed a few miles more, while Bill informs me that Mike is still in the Patrol car. Then he announces that they will not take Amex, personal Check, or cash. They want \$45 in Mastercharge/visa-/Bank Americard. No one in their car has such, and the alternative is a trip to the station-house. Can we help.

It turns out the only person in our car with the proper plastic is Dave. He has been listening to this little farce in one act with ever-diminishing amusement, but allows that he will put their speeding ticket on his card, rather than follow them to the local pokey.

So, here we are, about 6 miles from them, wanting to catch up fast, but not wanting to go fast at all. And there!! On the Horizon, it's a flashing light!! With a car pulled over!! A light tan compact!!... But Bill drives a red Oldsmobile. We discuss this with the CB who informs me that they are still in a red Olds, and that there were two cops.

Finally, after several eons of perceptual time, we arrive at the mile marker where they were pulled over. No Bill.

We arrive at M + .5, and still no Bill. At M + .75 we round a curve, and Bill pulls around and passes us, with a car full of slightly hysterical laughing fools.

"What happened"

"Its fixed"

"Elucidate" (my new word)

"Martha bribed the cop" (Martha Soukup)

"Elucidate some more"

"No problem"

"Maybe not now, but just you wait til we stop!"

In the course of the next few miles, we determined that they had

never been 6 miles ahead of us. At the most they were a little over 1 mile. At that point, they pulled off onto a ramp, waited until we passed them, and started following us, while playing Orsen Wells and War of the Worlds over the CB.

I suspect Dave and his wife were more than a little pleased to drop Greg and I off at the Hotel, and escape our merry little band of loonies. I further suspect that Thursday Night and a long Car-avan (Con-voy) are not the way to introduce a person to fandom.

Well, Dave still talks to me, and even asks questions about what I do in my spare time, but I think he'll be doing all his fanac vicariously through the stories I decide to repeat.

Enough natter....Mailing Comments...

Rodney Smith. Transporter topics: re your two questions.

1: Yes, It's one "f". It's short for Clifton. I used my full name (Clifton) exclusively up until I hit 7th grade or so, when it suddenly occurred to me that I was being awfully formal. At that point I started using "Cliff". This lasted until I got a business stamp for Christmas (for a small business I was running) with my name spelled with one "f". I commented on the mis-spelling, and my mother explained that the diminutive for Clifton is Cliff. It's great to suddenly realize that for two years you've been mis-spelling your own name.

2: My zine was on the back of Bill Higgins at the whim of the OE. I assume that Bill had given Greg a master of his zine to xerox, and Greg realized that he could combine zines and save white space and postage. Seems reasonable to me.

Bill H. Guylem Baardo.

re. One pill makes you louder... Maybe someday we get you and your uke, Cecile and the Kazoo, Bill and his 12 string, and I'll dig out my old electric bass, and the Fender amp with the two 15" speakers. We'll really do a full acousitic version...

Please continue excerpting AW & ST. In response, I'll try to toss in interesting things I pick up from Chemical and Engineering News.

Re: looking in the wrong places. Real good possibility. I find more of the people where I work now catch my allusions (and illusions). But they're mostly sf readers. The comment in my first zine was prompted by one of the people I used to work with. If it wasn't a one or a zero I don't think he'd read it. He was a nice guy, but when playing an Adventure variant, he found himself in a room with a Bell, a Book and a Candle, and a lot of spirits who wouldn't let him pass. I suggested that he try excorsizing the ghosts. He did, it worked, and he then asked me what bizarre mythos this Bell, Book and Candle excorsism was from. I didn't think Catholicism was that obscure.

I suspect that there are a set of catch phrases and concepts that one adsorbs by simple diffusion and affinity if you read sf, that allows you to communicate with other sf readers. Maybe if I watched TV I'd collect the proper jargon for talking with other people.

re your comment to Jamie about the telepathic linkage in True Names being non-realistic. It didn't bother me, and the concept of looking at a system as a set of nodes and paths has modified my thinking a little. If I had formal training in computers it might be old hat, but I find it fascinating and useful. Regarding the

telepathic link, just a few months ago a group someplace or other announced work being done on stimulating nerve cells to grow onto wires. The idea is to build artificial eyes and link them directly to the optic nerves. This isn't too far from the True Names link.

Rene Sieber, A Moral Tale. My sympathies on the move and household dissolution. It's been almost two years since Foralie broke up, and even though I'd never live in a situation like that again, I miss it occaissionally. Keeping close physically to your former housemates is a good idea. After Foralie broke up Chris Clayton and I bought mobile homes in the same park, and while it took a while for me to get over my anti-social reaction to having had too many people too close, having him a bombs throw away helped once I was ready to start talking to people again.

Good luck with the new household.

That's about it for this missive. A general RAEBNC for any zine not mentioned above. I'll quit while there's still disk space.

Meteorite enriched in levo amino acids

A new controversy has erupted among scientists who scrutinize meteorites in search of insights into planetary chemistry and possibly the origins of life.

Last month, geochemists Michael H. Engel and Bartholomew Nagy of the University of Arizona, Tucson, announced that they had found optically active amino acids enriched in the levorotatory or left-handed form in the Murchison meteorite [*Nature*, 296, 837 (1982)]. They believe these amino acids are indigenous to the meteorite, which fell in Australia almost 13 years ago. Although such levo organic compounds are associated with living organisms, Engel and Nagy, whose work was supported by the National Aeronautics & Space Administration, are careful not to invoke extraterrestrial biology. Rather, they speculate that these amino acids may have been formed through some type of stereoselective synthetic or decomposition reactions.

Other scientists, however, aren't willing to go even this far. They believe it's likelier that the meteorite sample was contaminated by terrestrial sources. In fact, the Arizona researchers concede this is "a serious possibility," but they're hoping that the work of other groups will support their conclusions.

Hypersomnia and lunch

It said here earlier that 50.8% of 3900 patients seen at 11 sleep disorders clinics suffered from hypersomnia—falling asleep against one's will (C&EN, March 8, page 60). Elsewhere on the same page it said that U.S. residents ate 50.8% of their lunches away from home in 1981.

Alan Pickett, in England, asks if anyone has seen a correlation between the 50.8% hypersomniacs and the 50.8% of lunches eaten out. How's that for alertness? To clarify the point, Pickett proposes in some detail a dietary study that is most unlikely to be funded.

DDT-loving bees found in Brazil
A species of bees, *Eufriesia purpurata*, that not only appear to have a resistance to the broad-spectrum insecticide DDT but actually go out of their way to collect and eat it has been found along the Ihu River in Amazonas, Brazil [*Nature*, 297, 62 (1982)]. Donald R. Roberts and associates from the University of Brasilia and the U.S. Army Environmental Hygiene Agency find that the bees are strongly attracted by the odor of DDT and accumulate it in their bodies to levels as high as 42,000 ppm, or more than 4% of their total body weight. Bioassays and field observation show no signs of ill effects on the bees, even though the average LD₅₀ dose for bees of all types is only 6 ppm.

Natural gas fuel cell leads off field tests

The way fuel cell development has gone, the units tend to be associated with spacecraft. But one is now perking away at Rawlinson's New System Laundry in Portland, Ore., a commercial laundry that will be testing the unit as a source of power for washing and drying clothes.

A lot of hopes are riding on the unit. It is the first on-site fuel cell power plant in a field test of 48 natural-gas-powered units to be placed at different geographical areas and a variety of commercial and public buildings over the next three years.

The Portland test will last a year and is sponsored by the Department of Energy and Gas Research Institute. Northwest Natural Gas Co. is carrying out the test in partnership with four other Pacific Northwest utilities. The system was designed and built by United Technologies Corp., South Windsor, Conn.

For the overall field test, DOE is procuring the first three units. GRI and DOE jointly are funding the manufacture of the other 45 fuel cells. Supporting the field testing are GRI and 23 participating utilities, including two in Japan.

Hello again, everybody, time once again for...

The TECHIE TATTLER!

This frantic minac, written in the cool of June, is by Doug Van Dorn, 7619 W. Clarence Ave., Chicago, IL 60631. I can be reached by phone during the day at (312)580-0033, ext. 6554, and at night (and on weekends, sometimes) at (312)763-1376.

It's Wednesday, June 2, and I'm doing an APA that was due yesterday (sort of). And I have another one to do after this that was also due yesterday (sort of). And this is the same type of introductory paragraph I've written for the last several 'zines. It's not a rut, it's lack of time to do this stuff anymore.

Let's see, this is a techie APA, what can I say that's techy and interesting? Well, we just got a whole bunch of IBM Personal Computers here at work. Our group has seven right now, with an eye toward having one at every desk before the end of next year.

In fact, we beta-tested Wordstar on the IBM. (Beta-testing is actual use by a prospective client, for feedback and usually for free.) I am not impressed by Wordstar. There is too much mandatory user-control over files. I feel like I should have taken a course in file management before starting out! And I have serious problems with a word processor that uses up nearly half the screen with an ever-present menu. I want to think about what I'm writing, not about what kinds of menus I could be looking at.

Also, the version I used couldn't be easily hooked up to a proportional printer. Although I did, and I ran a CAPACITY 'zine off on it, it still looks like I typed it. No interesting print wheels, etc.

Finally, I don't like having to rejustify my text every time I make a format change. This NBI that I'm on right now changes format automatically just by moving the cursor through the text.

And, for your fourth last chance, the control characteristics of Wordstar suck. Most of the useful commands are triple-keystroke commands, and are not very well laid out on the PC keyboard. In comparison, the NBI has dedicated keys for most of those several-stroke commands. The PC's function keys could easily be used, but aren't.

MOVIES

Damn. The movie I'd like most to review, E.T. - The Extra Terrestrial, won't be in general release until June 11, and even though I'm almost positive no one will get a disty until after that, someone might read this and get upset beforehand.

Oh, hell. That's their problem. If they're reading this in order, they'll be warned. E.T. is possibly the best movie of the last two years, definitely one of the top five I've

ever seen. It a tour de force by director Steven Spielberg (remember him?), who grabs the audience by the scruff of the neck and hauls them bodily through every emotion a movie can engender.

E.T. himself is the cutest, most adorable, most sympathetic character since R2D2, and then some. Carlo Rimbaldi (I think that's the right name), the man who designed the aliens for CE3K, outdid himself. E.T. moves believably, acts believably, emotes believably. It's a case of Yoda all over again. It is impossible to believe that E.T. was a collection of plastic, metal and wiring.

The effects (by Industrial Light and Magic, who else) are superb, but do not dominate the film. Spielberg's direction and auteur force dominate this movie. If he doesn't get nominated for an Oscar, I will be not only surprised, I will be shocked.

I hear from reliable sources that Star Trek II: The Wrath of Kahn (note how they took the word "vengeance" right out of the title?) is a very creditable ST film, a lot more like the TV show. I notice that, although the general uniforms are different from the first film, the Engineering radiation suits are carried over. Maybe the security uniforms (with the leather football helmets) will be, too.

You ever get the feeling I'm not going to get to any mailing comments?

Next year's Hugo for dramatic presentation is gonna be tough. There's E.T., Revenge of the Jedi is being released December 11 (I think that's the date, either that or December 4), Dark Crystal is coming out in December, The Secret of NIMH is coming out this summer, and there's always Conan, which'll get a few votes. I guess some people like huge, bulging muscles and senseless violence. Also Star Trek II. Having only seen one of the above, I still think E.T. may get it. It's such a good movie!

There will be a space shuttle night launch on July 4, 1983. Who'd like to come with me? It'd be a lot of fun, and you know I always do the driving.

An Amoral Tale: I get the feeling that all this talk about the goings-on in Kalamazoo is designed to get people to back either Donna or Renee. I refuse to do either. I consider all affected parties friends or at least friendly acquaintances, and I do not particularly like it when they try to pull people into one or another person's "camp." To tell you the truth, unless this is supposed to be an excuse for why we never get our disties until a month after deadline, I'd just as soon not hear (or read) it.

Well, that's about all the time we have this time, folks. Tune in again next time, when you may hear someone say:

"Oh, no, not minac again!" — DVD

Smith's CORONA

* Dick Smith + 227 S. Kenilworth + Oak Park, IL 60302 + 312-DUF-FUND +
for Apa-TECH #19 ~ June 1982

Last time we announced the big move... I guess most everything is settled by now. I managed to clean up well enough to have a Thursday Night Meeting, even.

Like Evanston, Oak Park is a comfortable place for "rising young urban professionals" to live. The center of culture we lose by moving away from Northwestern University, we regain by moving into the boyhood home of Ernest Hemingway [who grew up on Kenilworth Avenue] and the working place of Frank Lloyd Wright. We live a few blocks from the "Wright Historic District" where many fine examples of Prairie School architecture are preserved. And we're two blocks from Erik's [Weird] Danish Deli, where RubberBears [a wonderful candy that builds strong jaw muscles] are sold. Don't worry, we aren't alone, there is a small clump of Chicago fandom here, too. Michelle Fisher has been in Oak Park for a year, now, and there are a few others who live out this way.

Besides, the new apartment is amazing. It is the second & third floors of a refurbished house, with living room, dining room, kitchen and two bedrooms downstairs, and the main bedroom and Dick's Lab [formerly the "den"] in the former attic. Perhaps Valli & I will finally have enough room for all our junk.

Unfortunately for me, the Oak Park location means that the new apartment is located much farther west, to accomodate Valli's need to be able to commute to the western burbs for her job. My commute increases from 5 minutes to about half an hour, but I guess that's within the range I can tolerate; especially since I don't travel during the rush hours like she does. We're still close to the El, so access to the Loop isn't a problem.

Bill Higgins & I spent a few hours this week at the summer Consumer Electronics Show here in Chicago. Bill keeps talking about getting a home computer of some sort, and we went primarily to look at the units that interest him: low end, some kind of graphics, decent keyboard... in other words, we went to see a Commodore VIC-20, as well as a couple of others.

I had forgotten just how hyped up, how plastic, how silly the show is. There's an entire section of car stereos to skip, the porno queens signing autographs and pushing video tapes, the Playboy Bunnies reminding you that you can reach more buyers by advertising in Playboy. Fortunately, there are a few bright spots, like the free Wall Street Journal you get with the giant "trash bag" [a technical term for the free bags you hunt for as soon as you get enough

literature that you drop it every second step and the free Japanese fans and fortune cookies from Mart Magazine. The fans are especially important; it's hot and crowded, and you're wearing a coat & tie so that you look like the real engineer you are.

I wasn't particularly impressed by anything I saw. The VIC-20 produced better graphics than I expected from a cheap unit. Everyone has more and better arcade-type games for home use... Coleco seems to have the rights to many of this year's most popular arcade games (like Frogger & Zaxxon) but everyone has lookalikes of everything anyway, so I'm not sure if it matters. There are more telephone accessories, more (but not enough) software for the various formats of videodisk players. The private satellite receiver people looked tired, but their prices are getting almost reasonable. And there's a watch that plays Pac-Man.

That reminds me... go out and look for ZAXXON if you haven't seen it yet. It's an arcade game with much better video than I've seen before. In the game, you pilot a space-airplane (you know how these things are) over an asteroid with buildings and missile launchers and such; you get a good perspective view of the terrain as you control the plane in two dimensions while it flies forward constantly in the third. If you get thru the first asteroid/aircraft carrier like unit, then you dogfight some enemy planes for a while, and go on to a second. Near the end of that is a giant robot for you to shoot at. It takes high-quality video to make the perspective view work, and it works very well where previous games have had to be two-dimensional. I suspect that this is the first of a new generation of graphically improved games, but I don't know what else will follow.

I'm willing to give the administration of this apa a little time to get over the, er, turmoil that has been going on in Kalamazoo. After that, I'd hope for better performance from the OE. I'm always willing to postmail when I'm late, and have been told a couple times when I called to tell her that I was going to postmail that the apa wouldn't be collated until a certain date. Then it comes in the mail four weeks after that time. What should I think? I'm late again this time, and I hope the apa is collated soon after my zine arrives.

I expect to be at MidwestCon and Archon. See you there, or at Chicon.



I remain
Crick

A FOOLISH CONSISTENCY

...for Apa-Tech no. ~~18~~ 19 MISSED ANOTHER ISH... <SIGH>

Jamie Hanrahan, 18225 Kingsdale Ave. #208, Redondo Beach, CA 90278
(213) 542-9098

This issue's title is a partial answer to all those who asked me who Emerson was. (Actually, I'm sure you all know who Emerson was; what you really meant to ask was, "What did you mean by saying 'Emerson!' in your ct Renee?", right?) Ralph Waldo Emerson said, among many other things, that "a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds" -- for more background, see the intro to "A Dying Night" in Asimov's Mysteries -- page 71 in the Fawcett paperback edition.

The title is also a reference to my feelings about my apazines -- they seem so staid, formal, and unimaginative, compared to most. Maybe it would help if I learned to cartoon? Or is cartooning one of those things that you can't learn if you have to ask how to do it? (I rather suspect so.) I do know one thing that has helped, and that is not using a text editor and formatter; I tend to be more spontaneous at the typewriter*. I think.

Oh, well -- as long as I hear no cries of "get out of our apa, you mundane nurd!", I'll stick around.

MAILING COMMENTS ON APA-TECH #17

COVER: Verrrry nice, Al. (Hint to all: If you want to keep it looking nice, put it in a plastic sheet protector.)

ROD SMITH: Re revolutionizing space travel, I beg to disagree with you. What we desperately need is a way to apply force to the spacecraft from the ground, instead of requiring it to lift itself. I certainly don't disagree that we should hope for (and actively push for!) a surge of interest from Congress or industry; nor do I claim that we shouldn't keep trying to improve the systems we're using now. But we should also be doing much more research in every scientific field, particle and mathematical physics in particular, if we want to see any large jumps in our space-travel technology. // I'll answer your comments on lasers in a separate article.

KIP WILLIAMS: Welcome back... loved every bit of this, but no comments.

DAVID LEVINE: Loved your ct Paul. // Yes, follow up on Deafnet. // Re ct Jeff Sekiya, a Known Space zine sounds like a reasonable idea. It's my opinion that Niven's troubles stem largely from his association with Jerry Pournelle; the sooner that partnership breaks up, the sooner Niven will start writing quality stuff again. (Then again, he may just have run out of ideas.) // Re ct me, damned if I know who or what Wicce is, but it has to do with the cult/religion of those who call themselves "witches". Backus and Naur are the people who invented the metalanguage that was first used to describe Algol (you know, <program> ::= <statement> | <statement> <program>, and that sort of thing). You're partially right about the automatic trans.; it's best described, I guess, as a hybrid fluidic computer, since it takes both digital-style and analog-style inputs, and many of its internal workings are based on pressure levels reaching various thresholds, not the absolute presence or absence of pressure. Re Arpanet, TIP's, and etc., I'll explain later. Ditto re laser weapons.

*But I do get carried away with the auto-underline key, don't I?

A FOOLISH CONSISTENCY

page 2

(mc's on AT 17, continued)

JOHN FRAMBACH: Interesting zine. Certainly, many acts that are illegal can be justified under certain special circumstances. The real problems begin when people look at a situation and take action based on their first-glance analysis, only to realize later that their action wasn't called for.

AL DUESTER: I've never felt that way about cities -- only this one (LA). You'd like San Diego. Hell, everybody likes San Diego, which is why the job market there is so bad. While it's considerably larger than your 200K threshold, it just doesn't feel like it -- and the museums, concert halls, cons, and scrounge shops of LA are just two hours' drive away. // I added follow-ups on the LAPD copter incident last time; no news since then. // Liked your whole zine muchly, but no other cts.

GRETCHEN: Your zine sounds like the intro to my last contrib to SW-APA...

No, an APA isn't worth the time and trouble if there are no discussions that you're interested in, or if (worse) the people participating in the discussions aren't bothering to read and think about what the others are writing (which is the case with SW-APA). I for one will not be glad to see you go... I don't think anyone here will be. But if you think that the APA is a net waste of your time, I don't think anyone here will beg you to stay, either. Apahacking isn't for everyone (Ghu knows, it isn't really for me); why force yourself? No one I know has so much free time that they can afford to waste some of it on something that they don't really care about.

(If I don't shut up soon, I'm going to talk myself into a corner, get Gretchen and the rest of the members mad at me, AND talk myself into quitting both this apa and SW-APA...)

So: Go and do whatever it is you most want to do with the time you've been spending on Apa-Tech zines, and know that no one thinks you really ought to be ashamed of yourself for leaving, or any such nonsense. Know, too, that you'll be welcomed back anytime. Okay? See you at Chicon.

DOUG: (Please show the preceding to Gretchen, unless I twisted it around somehow, as is my wont.) Alas, losing VOIR has lost us the director of JPL -- he just resigned last week, mostly for lack of things to do.

PAUL GADZIKOWSKI (why didn't I type Doug and Gretchen's last names?): I know at least one other fannish Paul -- Paul Newitt, currently of Santee, California. ("In Santee, no one can hear you scream," he says.)

JEFF SEKIYA: Re yr ct Paul, what your prof. is getting at is that people usually attribute "supernatural" or "psychic" causes to things "because they're just too improbable", without having any idea of what the probabilities involved actually are. As a quick example: Suppose I told you that on a standard Rhine card telepathy test, I got a score that could only be expected by chance one out of five times. Suppose, in fact, that this happened on ten consecutive tests. Evidence for psi? Hardly; those are the chances of getting exactly five out of the twenty-five cards right, by chance alone. In other words, the result most favored by chance won't happen four out of five times. (Close reading of parapsychology literature reveals a staggering ignorance of simple probability. Try it sometime; might be good for a short thesis.)

(mc's on AT 17, still continued)

(How is it that everyone else can get their mc's into so much less space?)

BILL LEININGER: Yes, let's hear it for NPR! While you're listening, see if your local affiliate doesn't carry As It Happens, a Canadian news programme. Just as good as All Things Considered, but quite different; the two complement each other. (It's carried on CBC short wave as well.)

DICK SMITH: Read your netmail more often! I already knew how a diesel engine works... What did you use on those illos, thermal-transfer ditto master? The last reminds me of how I felt the first time I got my hands into Gail's Renault. I didn't have quite that many pieces on the floor, but they were all such strange shapes!

VALLI: Have Jeff D. send you a new GTIH. I think we'll just be putting out update pages from now on, as there aren't that many changes. //
RAEBNotherC.

MUBETAN: Liked your comments on The Soul of a New Machine. // Gail, who recently attended a Unix user's group meeting, reports that some Lucasfilm types were there, too. They listened a lot and didn't say anything. // Page 5: Couldn't agree with you more about the potentials of GT -- hey, add DEC and TRW to that list of employers! But how do you suggest we, um, discharge that potential? The Mass Driver project is pretty much forgotten, it would seem. Any ideas? (I'm thinking, I'm thinking.)

Re Unix, VMS, the 432, et al: I agree; I wouldn't run VMS on a 68000 or a 432 either -- it was designed for the VAX, and simply could not be adapted to a machine that did not have a virtually (pun intended) identical architecture. Nor would I want to propagate DCL (VMS's command language); although the command names and options are meaningful and consistent, making them easier to learn than Unix's, its "programming" capabilities are a giant step backward, as it lacks both IF-THEN-ELSE and WHILE. (It's fairly easy, though, to write a C-shell interpreter in DCL, one that supports I/O redirection, pipelining with multitasking, and all the rest.)

But Unix has not, and will not, outsell VMS for any size VAX: The latest figures I've seen show that 80% of all VAX's shipped to date, and 90% of all those on order, include fully-supported VMS systems.

But, you're right -- Unix already is a rather powerful force. A glance through the pages of any recent copy of Byte will turn up a dozen or so different microcomputers, all claiming to run some variant of Unix. DEC customers will soon be able to buy their Unix licenses through DEC along with the hardware, and full DEC support can't be too far behind. There are also signs in Version 3 of VMS that DEC will soon fully support Unix as a layered system, running under (or on top of? Depends on how you draw your memory maps) VMS. (You didn't hear any of this from me, by the way!) I think it's inevitable; there are too many aerospace firms who got used to running Unix on their 11's (because it's the only O/S for the -11 that DOD would certify for secure processing), and who want to run it on their VAXes as well.

It would be nice to have a programming language, set of system calls, and run-time library that you could expect to find on almost any reasonable computer, wouldn't it? It really does look as if C and Unix will be them. (Oh, I forgot to mention: VMS Ver. 3 includes a C compiler. The DCL command to invoke it is, of course, CC... and we'll also be supporting Unix-style stream-format files.)

(mc's to Bentley, continued)

[type font change will be explained later]

Then again, AT&T just bought over a hundred VAXen for some huge network or other, and they'll be using VMS. Then again², there are rumors that AT&T is thinking about buying DEC!

HIGGINS: Re ct me, followers of Wicce are also known as pagans, witches, etc.

// I don't think Mike B. and I are starting any feuds; I don't know why he thinks the VAX is an "oh-hum" machine, and I don't know nearly enough about the 432 to comment on it. The wonderfulness of the VAX, from most people's point of view (incl. mine), stems from (a) the flexibility of its instruction set; (b) the flexibility of its addressing modes; and (c) the way the hardware and software work together to implement virtual memory. In (a) and (b) the VAX is an evolutionary development from the PDP-11; in (c) it is far superior, in my opinion, to anything else on the market with which I'm familiar. If you want to know more, find a copy of Eckhouse and Levy's Computer Programming and Architecture: The VAX-11. Despite the fact that it's pubbed by Digital Press, it presents a mostly-unbiased view of the VAX's design, and even compares it to other machines like the IBM 360/370, the CDC Cyber series, the IBM Series 1, and (of course) the PDP-11. If you want me to write more on this topic, I will, but I don't know how many others will be interested.

GREG: Re ct me on Chicon rooms -- life continues its perverse path. Through some miracle, we got our Chicon P.R. 3 right on time. Sent in the reservation form with a check, and got a confirmation notice a few weeks later: We were In at the Hyatt. (Oh, they messed up too; had us down for a one-person room, but that was fixed with a phone call.) Then Keith told us that "everyone" (or word to that effect) would be staying in the Radisson, because it was the closest hotel with a pool... hmph. I spent far too much time walking from the con to my hotel and back in Boston. The way I see it, it's better to walk two blocks with your friends to go for a swim every once in a while than to have to walk two blocks every time you want to go to your room. // Needless to say, I was exaggerating about L.A. pollution; sure, planets are visible. Occasionally you can even see a third-mag. star.

ALL OTHERS: RAEBNC.

MAILING COMMENTS ON APA-TECH #18

COVER: I've seen worse.

~~ORDERS FROM H.Q.~~ EDITORIAL COMMENTS: There is one good reason to move the GTBship to Chicago: Better mail service. On occasion I have wanted to express-mail my contrib, but Express Mail service is not available to Kalamachoo. This isn't a major consideration, though, since as I understand it most of the delays in distribution of this apa were not caused by postal misservices. Perhaps GTB should subject herself to a thorough soul-searching -- of the same order as that described by Renee re Isher -- and see whether she really wants to devote however-many hours per month to this apa, or simply wants to hang onto it because she started it. If the latter motivation is the stronger, the apa really would be better off in someone else's hands.

Re. covers: No, I'm not talented, at least not that way.

(mc's on AT18, continued)

ROD SMITH: Re classics of technology: And ECL is still the fastest logic family in general use, after ten years or so -- and the cathode ray tube is still the best way to generate large, high-resolution displays. // *I* remember the original broadcasts of Alfred Hitchcock!

KEITH: Re Museumcon -- There isn't much else to the Newcomen engine! Steam enters the cylinder, pushing the piston up. Cylinder loses heat, steam condenses, piston goes back down. Operator lets more steam in. Repeat until operator gets bored and quits or cylinder gets too warm to let steam condense effectively, which happens rather soon. Don't feel bad; I only know that because I remember James Burke describing it on Connections. I'll bet there isn't one person in all of GT who could answer all the questions asked by those two. // Re Ishercon comments -- I like the "cockpit" style video games too. Ever see the original version of "Deathrace 2000"? It was one of those sit-down-in-the-seat driving simulators. Came out several years ago; graphics weren't much by current standards, but were adequate for the task. The idea was to "drive" your "car" through a maze of city streets. Periodically a pedestrian or two would appear and would try to run across your path; the object was to run down as many of them as you could..! It was quickly withdrawn in response to a huge protest from parents and replaced with a much tamer top-view version. I've often thought that anyone who marketed a home computer game of that sort would make a, er, killing... You listening, Bentley?

CAPTAIN AL: Nice title (but PDP-11 hackers have long been saying "Down to the C [carry bit] in shifts). // Re Boskone -- I stayed at the Park Plaza during Noreascon. A nice hotel to sleep in, but not to hold a con in.

Re ct me, I am going to shock all the electronic-music fans here and say that I'm really not that fond of Walter/Wendy Carlos's work; in all of her adaptations, I prefer the conventionally-instrumented versions for serious listening. Electronic classical is great fun, but only that, as far as I'm concerned. Which isn't to say it can't be a lot of fun; one album you missed is Everything You Always Wanted To Hear On The Moog, But Were Afraid To Ask For by Kazdin and Shepard (Columbia Masterworks M30383). Marvelous versions of España, Malagueña, and selections from Carmen, plus Ravel's Bolero (which ends with a hearty round of synthesized applause!).

Nor am I that fond of Tomita. And I agree with you that Tangerine Dream's stuff gets monotonous at times. Ommadawn rates a !; likewise Jean Michael-Jarre's Equinoxe and Oxygene (haven't heard his third one). If I had to pick one favorite artist out of all of them, it would be Larry Fast, with no hesitation. Legacy, in particular, is a stunning piece of work, both in composition and in performance. Comments?

I now have a very good cassette deck with adjustable bias and bias calibration oscillator. Certainly, send me a list of albums, and I'll do likewise. (No Dolby C capability as yet, though. The noise floor in our living room isn't low enough to make it worthwhile, and it probably won't ever be.) Gail and I are mostly into jazz (everything from swing era to fusion, but not incl. vocals), classical, and light rock...

JOHN FRAMBACH: Power failures aren't that frequent around here; we get momentary glitches just long enough to knock out the non-battery-backed-up clocks, and that's about it. Some time ago, though, we were on our way home and decided to eat dinner at a certain pizza place in Marina del Rey.

A FOOLISH CONSISTENCY

[this is such a good title that I'm positive someone must have used it before.
But then, just about everything has been used before.]

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(mc's on AT18, continued)

(John Frambach, contd.) It was about half an hour past sunset, and as we got near the place we noticed that all the traffic lights were out. As we drove past the place we looked inside; the only light was coming from candles on the tables. Marina del Rey is a slightly-seedy beach community; we looked at each other, considered the prospects, and drove home. That's how Angelenos handle lights-out: By staying (or going) home... // I too would like to see someone do a definitive APA jargon glossary. (Please don't call it "slang".)

PAUL GADZIKOWSKI: It's easy to join GT. You send Jeff Duntemann a letter and a SASE; he sends you a GT Info Handbook form. You fill out the form, send it to me, and send Jeff a dozen or so stamps plus a dollar bill or two. Presto! // (Oh, that was supposed to start with "Re yr ct TOC.") Re ct Dave (Dave who? Oops, forgot: Only one Dave here. Outside of Apa-Tech, it seems that every third friend or acquaintance I have is named Dave. It's a conspiracy, that's what it is.) Anyway, re yr ct Dave re Known Space -- whad-dya mean, Known Space hasn't got a constant regular cast? Granted there are a few novels in the series, each with its own set of characters. But there is a whole bookful of shorts featuring (mostly) Beowulf Shaeffer, two books featuring Louis Wu and crew, and two more books about Gil Hamilton. There are supporting-cast connections between all of them, too. I think what makes media sf so subject to fanwriting is that it is so obviously episodic. Every week, for instance, Kirk and crew met up with a new group of aliens, or never-before-seen-crew, or whomever. The usual mediafan's stories feature "guest stars" easily identifiable as the writer and friends -- easy to do in the context of a TV series, not so easy with a series of short stories.

BILL ROPER: Re ct Dave: When someone is warned the first time about an excessive display of assholity, a simple handheld paper punch could be applied to their badge. // I liked "Emergence" too, and will give it my first-place vote. After much thought I figured out why I liked it: It's almost pure Heinlein-style, but without Heinlein's failings.

DICK AND VALLI'S COA: Cute... But I'll bet it won't be the last.

JERRY CORRIGAN: Re ct Rod Smith on hand-held laser weapons, you're absolutely right... details later, maybe. (I may polish my lasergun essay and run it in the mythical west coast Pyro I'm supposed to be working on.)

HIGGINS: Certainly you should keep summarizing news from AW&ST. // Re ct me, I'm afraid I still don't get it. Quit being so damned condescending and tell me what the bloody hell SMOOTH.ZERO is supposed to be!!!! Please.

Re "True Names" -- I tend to agree with you. The idea that one could interpret electrical signals fed directly to the brain as images, sounds, etc., is not that startling. But the notion of a worldwide group of syscrackers setting things up so that they could get such signals from "the system" is beyond belief. I have strong doubts that any two people would respond to such signals the same way; each "vandal's" home processors would have to convert the incoming stuff into whatever was suitable for the individual misuser. The notion that everyone would automagically interpret signals from various data

(mc's on AT18, continued)

(Bill H., contd.) structures, system components, and completely-unexpected events -- like that attack on the comm satellite -- by perceiving appropriately-analogous and similar images and sounds is even more absurd. I also had a lot of trouble accepting the ease with which those people slipped through login protocols -- many present-day operating systems are impervious to attempted logins unless the correct passwords are known, even with a fast computer at the other end to generate and try all possible passwords. This isn't to say that I didn't like "True Names"; I did. It's worth a Hugo nomination; the "true names" analogy is so perfect that it forgives a lot of sins. It's not worth a Hugo, though. I'm voting for "Emergence".

VALLI: RAEBCNC. DEC's hiring freeze is still in force, alas. [Note to others: Don't bother searching our past zines for references to that; it relates to something we talked about elsewhere.]

RENEE: Why did you start an apa if you "sorely hate" typing and composing? // You didn't tell us what you were planning to do now... your reason for taking the risk -- essentially, because it was there -- of throwing your lot in with Isher makes sense to me, at least.

CLIF FLYNT: Your 'tirade' sounds almost reasonable. But I don't think that non-weapon gadgets, no matter how wonderful, will be as attractive to those-who-want-to-be-cool as weapons are. I hope I'm wrong, though... on second thought, the non-weapon gadgets I've built for people have attracted quite a bit of attention. Maybe there's hope. We could make a general request that GT'ers stop wielding weapons at cons...

on VMS, Unix, etc.

Re ct me, I'll answer your query in a separate letter. (Now, why did I put that lone sentence in a separate graf?)

postmailing comments

DONNA: Those pencils sound like fun; maybe I'll buy a few and pass them out to my studii, see who comments. (You didn't think to have them say "No. 42", did you?)

MUBETAN: An order for the RUNIC documentation will be coming to Starside semi-immediately -- not that I have a system to run it on, but I'm always interested in new languages. Maybe I'll even kluge up a VMS implementation and send it your way. In my spare time, of course. // Yes, that ad looks awfully suspicious. I think I'll send in one of them r-s cards...

GREG: Your closing questions -- "Is s-f obsolete? Why should anyone go to the stars? ... Why should we develop artificial intelligence?" In reverse order: AI systems may help us understand biological intelligence, and may point the way toward more efficient use thereof. In the meantime, AI has already given us tools for cracking problems that couldn't be solved easily by "ordinary" algorithms. // I don't know why anyone should want to go to the stars, but I'm very sure that I want to. Granted, interstellar flight would be fantastically difficult, dangerous, and expensive. But in the process of making it less so, we will develop solutions for countless other problems. (If you detect a pattern here, you're absolutely right.) As for sf being obsolete -- considering the contents of most of the new titles in the field, I tend to agree with you... but seriously, ~~whose side are you on, anyway~~ I think you're

[I type my page headings on left-and-right sides, for even-and-odd pages, out of habit. I just now remembered that I can't do double-sided copies for free any more...]

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(ct to Greg, cont.) off base. Most of the best sf deals with the results of technological change, not the means by which the change is accomplished. Anyway, most of the technological developments that are the basis of my favorite what-if-this-was-possible stories (Niven's) are still ten or a hundred years in the future. I wouldn't drop my SFBC membership just yet.

* * *

THINGS OTHER THAN MAILING COMMENTS (finally!!!)

If all goes well, Gail will be joining AT thish. In fact, as I type this, she's putting final touches on her zine. I'll let her explain the equipment she's using; suffice it to say that PyroTectonics will look very good indeed (assuming we ever get around to producing it).

As those of you with very sharp eyes (and knowledge of IBM type fonts) may have deduced by now, I've sold that Cadillac (in the pejorative sense) of a typewriter, the IBM ET50. We bought an Olivetti Praxis 35 as a replacement. Simply stated, we both love it. I heartily recommend the Praxis to anyone who wants an interchangeable-font typewriter at a reasonable price (\$500 or less, depending on where you shop). It doesn't do proportional spacing like the IBM, but it does have triple pitch (10, 12, and 15cpi, the latter being terrific for cassette labels and car-loan applications), and automatic correction (via IBM-like lift-off tape, not cover-up) of the last ten characters typed. It takes the same printwheels that Chuck Ott's ET221 does: They're expensive, about \$30 apiece, but they have a large number of special characters on them in addition to the regular typewriter set. Best of all, the unit is quiet. When typing, it makes about as much noise as a quiet manual portable; when idle, it is absolutely silent (unlike the IBM unit, which hummed and ticked expectantly while I was trying to think of what to type next). And, judging by various ads in Byte, the Olivetti is interfaceable, or whatever the word is. I don't know how in the world Olivetti and its retailers can afford to sell this machine for under \$500, but if you're in the market for anything of this sort, I suggest you trot out and look at one of these before they come to their senses. (If you don't need the triple-pitch capability, there's a 10-cpi-only version, the Praxis 30, for about \$80 less!)

IS KILOBAUD (oops, excuse me: "Microcomputing") DYING?

Looks like it to me. Take a look at the index to advertisers in the May issue. Look in vain for Radio Shack, Apple, IBM, Vector Graphic, Cromemco, Digital Research (the software house, not the mail-order computer dealer, who is listed), Personal Software, and even Wayne Green's own company, Instant Software. Now, not all those companies appear in Byte's May issue either -- but most of them advertise in Byte regularly. Microcomputing, by contrast, has suffered a consistent lack of "big-name" advertisers and a steadily decreasing page-count for at least the last year. Or so it looks to me; I haven't kept close watch. But I wouldn't send 'em any three-year subscription orders.

CONVENTION NOTES

I want to discredit Keith's widespread disparaging of Anaheim, CA, the locale of the '84 Worldcon (assuming LA wins the bid). It is true that the convention center is directly across the street from Disneyland, and is therefore smack in the middle of the largest concentration of motels and "motor inns" you're ever likely to find. I suppose the word "tacky", which Keith is wont to use, is appropriate. However, the area is also clean, brightly-lit at night, and absolutely safe to be in -- the Anaheim P.D. won't tolerate any nonsense near their prime tourist ~~trap~~ attraction. Of course, if you want to criticize the location on the grounds that there's no hotel directly attached to the convention center (though there are several that share the same city block), go right ahead.

...BUT IT BEATS WORKING FOR A LIVING

During the last two months I've had to do two local on-site courses. That is, they were taught at the customer's location, but the customer was in the LA area, so I didn't have to do any travelling. Both were at the Huntington Beach facility of McDonnell Douglas. I hope I never have to work in such a place on a permanent basis.

The class consisted mostly of programmers working on what was called LOADS (Low Altitude Defense System -- an ABM system designed to protect MX silos; pronounced "low-ads"), and is now called "Sentry". Most of them were new, a year or less out of college, although some of them were ten- and twenty-year veterans. I spent quite a lot of time talking with both groups. The veterans had, in the space of their careers, been shunted around from one project to another almost at random; only one of them could actually remember staying with a project through completion, and he hadn't been with that project at the beginning. The new hires had little or no idea of exactly what they would be working on, what it was supposed to do, or (most importantly to me) what facilities of the operating system they would most need to know about. The veterans didn't know either, but were less worried, since they had grown used to such conditions.

What really made me wonder was the fact that the person who commissioned the classes I taught didn't know what was wanted either!

The physical environment was pretty awful, too. Mazes of corridors and cubicles, with dingy walls, battered old desks, and terminals perched precariously on stacks of five-year-old printouts and card decks. CARD DECKS!!!! The classroom I had to use had about enough desk space for 12 people; the class contained 25. And instead of the lovely whiteboards and colored markers I use at DEC, I had to use chalk. There were two chalkboards, each about five feet wide, separated by a five-foot overhead projector screen that couldn't be moved nor written on. By the end of the week I was almost choking to death on chalkdust.

I can't imagine how anyone can work in such a place. As I said, I guess they get used to it. I can think of no worse fate.

But, then, it's possible that they didn't have a choice -- maybe they simply couldn't find jobs anywhere else. I wouldn't be surprised; with one or two exceptions, they were the worst students I've ever had.

THE ARPANET CONSPIRACY

There, do I have your attention? I've been promising for several issues now to explain something about Arpanet to various interested parties. All right, here goes.

Arpanet was started in (I believe) the middle or late sixties by the Advanced Research Projects Administration of the Department of Defense. The goal was to link together the computers of a large number of universities, government agencies, and private research firms which were doing ARPA-funded work, to facilitate the exchange of information. This goal was, by and large, achieved. However, another result occurred as well, mainly due to the large number of schools that were hooked into the net.

Simply put, hackers all over the country can communicate over Arpanet, primarily via the mail programs that exist on most of the host machines. Many of the machines on the net also serve as "gateways" to other networks -- in particular, to numerous Unix-to-Unix copy (uucp) nets, and to the DEC Engineering network -- so that users of machines on those nets can exchange mail with users on Arpanet hosts, or with users on any of the other nets. All of this, of course, is in direct contradiction to the wishes of the DoD, which requires that anyone operating an Arpanet host restrict traffic to things which are directly pertinent to DoD/ARPA-funded projects. But the Arpanet community continues to flourish and grow, regardless.

There are several special-interest newsletters operating on the network. Most of these look like an edited and controlled CBBS. To make an entry, one sends it to the moderator of the "digest" in question; the moderator ignores the obscene entries, redirects those more suited to other digests, and does some amount of arranging and coordinating (for instance, he will frequently arrange all entries pertaining to a single topic together). The moderator then mails the digest to everyone on the mailing list. Two of the more interesting digest are called HUMAN-NETS (which generally focuses on the human-engineering aspects of computer software) and SF-LOVERS (which is exactly what you think it is: An electronic apa, albeit with very short contribs). Digests, btw, tend to come out almost every day. Gail receives both SF-LOVERS and HUMAN-NETS at TRW (via a uucp link to a machine at Rand), and each day's edition of each is usually five to ten or so printer pages long. Needless to say, these newsletters are not approved by DoD, but they've known about them for some time, and haven't done much. I guess the "unofficial" traffic on Arpanet hasn't reached critical mass (i.e. the point at which it impedes the flow of "official" traffic) yet.

(By the way, everyone: Do me a favor and do NOT discuss this stuff outside of the apa. SF-LOVERS tries to maintain a zero-height profile in the fan community. If it became known that many people were clamoring for guest accounts on Arpanet host machines just to read SF-LOVERS, it would quickly be stepped on...)

But what you really want to know is how to gain access, right? Well, I can't tell you, unless you live in the LA area. I can give you some idea of where to look, though.

To "get on" Arpanet means, simply, to log onto a machine which is connected to it and to run the various net communication programs (primarily Netmail) on your local machine, which let you send messages, receive messages, and etc. from all other hosts on the net. Since there are costs associated with sending and receiving data over the net, a particular host system might have access restrictions on such programs, so that the typical local user never "sees" the network at all.

If you can't find (or get an account on) a nearby host, you might be able to get a guest account at one of MIT's machines. Now, this does not mean you will have to do all your Arpahacking via long-distance phone calls to Massachusetts. Many places which operate Arpanet host computers also have a TIP, or Telephone Interface Processor, on the premises. A TIP is a small computer-based gadget that provides a gateway to the net to anyone with a terminal and a modem. To use a TIP, you dial its number (aye, there's the rub! Finding the number) and tell it which Arpanet host machine you want to talk to. Thenceforth you're talking to the Arpanet host, just as if you'd called it directly. Some TIP-operating institutions have complicated the process by instituting "TIP login", which means that you have to enter a username and password just to get access to the TIP. Life is rough all over...

Now, about those MIT machines: In the Good Old Days when none of this was known very widely, and in fact before Arpanet existed at all, MIT was quite friendly to "guest" users. Of course, since the "guests" had to come to MIT to use their free accounts, there wasn't too much of a problem. MIT found, much to their satisfaction, that allowing various and sundry hackers and would-be hackers to play with their machines generated few problems, and in fact had many benefits: Many system enhancements, utilities, tutorial manuals, etc., have been written by these "guest" users. This policy continued for many years after Arpanet was established; in fact, until a year or so ago, if you tried to log onto an MIT computer with an unknown username, you would end up in a program that would politely take down your application for a guest account. It was rare for such applications to not be granted.

Recently, though, things have changed. There are now about 'n'hundred times as many people with datacomm capability as there were ten years ago, thanks to the existence of home computers and cheap modems. Many of these are in the hands of high school (and other) students with lots of time on their hands and a "phone phreak" attitude toward anything they can dial-up to. I know the type; I used to be one of them -- but I like to think that I knew when to quit. Most of them don't.

So, MIT's attitude toward "tourists" has changed drastically. If you try to log in to one of their machines with an unknown username, you are given a curt message that tells you where to send your request for an account. -- The request has to be in writing, and you have to get someone at MIT to "sponsor" you in your tourist status. All of which makes life very difficult for those who didn't get tourist accounts before the crackdown.

I'm sorry to be so depressing, but that's how it is. A few years ago, it would have been quite feasible for everyone in GT with access to a terminal to get a guest account on an MIT machine, and we'd have had our network. These days, we have to do it ourselves.

ON LASERS AS HAND (AND SHOULDER) WEAPONS.

I'm afraid they won't work. In fact, they're so manifestly impossible that I have a very hard time accepting them in hard sf.

Jeff Hecht, former managing editor of Laser Focus, had a rather long article on this topic in P*S*F*Q. Some of his assumptions were too pessimistic for my tastes, but I find that even if I use a much more favorable (to the weapons designer, that is) set of assumptions, I come up with the same conclusion: They won't work.

The trouble is that a laser is really a very inefficient way to convert electrical power, or chemical energy, into radiant energy -- and it takes one helluva lot of radiant energy to kill a man, particularly if it all has to be applied in a very small spot. Remember Dave Levine's description of the industrial laser accident? If you assume that you can get those effects by flash-vaporizing just one cc. of water in the victim's body, and that those effects are sufficient to knock the victim out of action instantly (in that particular case, they weren't, but then he wasn't hit in a vital region), and that the body is pure water (good enough for a first approximation), you need to deliver about 2000 joules to the target; to compensate for atmospheric absorption, clothing worn by the victim, etc., the laser will have to produce at least twice that much.

Now, there are some hard limits on just how much energy you can get out of a laser of a given design and size. This laser will have to be a gas, not liquid or solid-state type, because of the power requirements -- the laser medium has to be "pumped" with many times the required output energy, and anything of carryable size other than a gas will quickly become a gas when you pump it with tens of thousands of joules over and over again. How much energy can we get out of a gas laser? Well, one of the most efficient lasers in the world, the Antares fusion laser, only produces about 50 joules per liter.

Even if we assume that we can do ten times better than that, our 4000-joule portable laser will have to have an optical cavity of 8 liters. Visualize it, as a 1 cm.-square cross section, 80 meters in length... Folded cavities are possible, but still, this gadget isn't going to be particularly portable.

Some of these problems can be overcome by going to a chemical laser, such as that thought up by Rod Smith (in AT17). [BTW, Rod, a "gas dynamic" laser is a conventional, electrically-pumped gas laser in which the gas is circulated from cavity to cooling apparatus and back again. What you described would be a chemical laser.] However, they introduce problems of their own. Most important is the difficulty of disposing of the reactants after firing. Every time a hydrogen/flourine laser fires, it exhausts a quantity of incandescent HF gas. HF, while not nearly as reactive as raw flourine is, is still quite corrosive, and almost certainly lethal if inhaled. The fact that the laser's exhaust will be a white-hot flame won't improve its behavior any, either. I think you'd be better off packing the flourine in easily-breakable containers and throwing them at the enemy lines.

There are other problems, too. For instance, a layer of reflective cloth under your camouflage clothes would provide near-total protection from laser fire, at minimal cost in weight and flexibility. A laser of this power would

have to be an external-mirror design, and anyone who's worked with such lasers knows how susceptible they are to dust, misalignment, and so forth. I suppose the entire cavity-and-mirror assembly could be packed as a sealed, easily-replaceable module, but there's one part of the unit that would be impossible to protect from dust: The output window. If the laser is ever fired with so much as a tiny bit of dust there, said dust would instantly blacken -- so that the next time it's fired, that spot on the window would absorb a good portion of the beam's energy, probably cracking the window.

Last but not least, any appreciable amount of dust or smoke in the air would deflect and absorb enough of the beam to make the weapon useless.

Doesn't sound too promising, does it? If you want to use a portable energy weapon in hard sf, either call it something other than a laser, or make some reference to a theoretical advance that solves the problems outlined above...

MICRO-REVIEW: THE WARLOCK UNLOCKED by Christopher Stasheff

Highly recommended. This book is, of course, the sequel to The Warlock In Spite Of Himself, and might well be subtitled "A Week In The Life of Rod Gallowglass". There is no mistaking the fact that TWISOH described the most important events that will ever occur in Rod's life; this book, unlike most sequels, does not attempt to describe another major turning point for its main character. Instead, Stasheff simply picks up Rod, some six or seven years after TWISOH, and describes the sorts of things that are happening to him in his new post. A rather long intro adds another building-block to the mythology of Murphy in technological sf; I won't explain further, except to say that yellow-handled pocket screwdrivers have taken on a new significance... My only reservation about recommending this book is that you have to have read TWISOH first. It will make zilch sense otherwise.

That's it for now. Gail has just returned from a trip to TRW, where she generated the masters for her zine. Now we have to drive up to DEC, run off 'n' copies on the stupid copier that won't make double-sided copies, and stuff 'em in an envelope -- it is now Sunday, June 6, and I am damned well going to make the deadline this time! See you in AT20, and at Chicon.

Jamie